In Primo

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IN PRIMO

A STORY OF FACTS AND FACTORS

BY

ENILED

Sarah M. De Line



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TO

MY FATHER AND MOTHER,

WHO TAUGHT ME TO LOVE THE TRUTH.

FOREWORD.

IN PRIMO is intended to help young people and those who guide them to realize the importance of beginning life with high ideals and noble purposes. Intercourse with people in many homes of many lands has disclosed a need for the right kind of a foundation in the building of character, and for the use of the right material in its structure. A little wrong interwoven destroys its beauty, strength and symmetry. If this simple story shall prove an incentive to truer living and greater achievement, it will have accomplished its mission and satisfied the ambition of the author.

IN PRIMO.

CHAPTER I.

Miss Fledding, the daughter of a well-to-do London tradesman, was sent to the Continent to complete her studies. Subsequent business misfortunes necessitated her accepting a situation in the school where she was educated. Two years later she was married to Mr. Bradford, and removed to America, where, soon after their arrival, her husband died, and she established a school in the town of S——, naming it Fledding.

S——, like most other towns on the Ohio river, had a mixed population. Among them were many whose fortunes were wrecked during the Civil War, in consequence of which their means were limited; yet they seemed to have lost little of their social pride, and to a great extent, retained a strong prejudice against Northerners and their institutions.

Mrs. Bradford's English manners and Continental education recommended her to this class of people, and they patronized her school. Through them her reputation reached many families living farther south, and annually she received new pupils from different Southern States.

Although many of these families, through stern necessity, had to exert themselves to obtain a livelihood, still, as intimated, they had strong prejudices and no small contempt for those who labored for a living. However, as the girls from these families grew older they seemed to form more practical ideas of life; and year by year the new-comers to the Seminary were less and less pronounced in their views.

Fledding was not a rich, fashionable school. Moreover, Mrs. Bradford could not have conducted such an institution. Her pupils paid little and expected little in return. The rooms, although plainly furnished, were comfortable and cozy. If Mrs. Bradford did not furnish an elaborate table, no complaint was made, for most Southern families had grown accustomed to plain fare.

The young ladies passed out of the Seminary fairly accomplished, and their parents were satisfied that in this school there were no associations that would tend to lower their social standing. They did not, by any means, regard their teachers as being on a social level with themselves. When enumerating the advantages of Fledding Seminary, Mrs. Bradford never failed to remark that Miss Berkely, language, history and art teacher, belonged to an old, aristocratic New York family of fallen fortunes; and that she had a superior education, was unusually accomplished and had the bearing of a princess. Owing to these circumstances, I, who am Esther Berkely, received more social consideration from the young ladies than did the other teachers.

The teachers stood much in awe of Mrs. Bradford.

In a way I never could understand, she succeeded in impressing them with the idea that it was a great privilege, as well as an honor, to teach in a school patronized by the old aristocracy of the South. Among themselves there seemed to be more or less striving for favor from Mrs. Bradford, and popularity with the pupils; consequently, there existed a degree of jealousy among them, together with a disposition to take any possible advantage of each other's misfortunes and mistakes.

As teachers, they were mechanical—and satisfied to do the same work in the same way year after year. Hence, they manifested little animation when instructing their classes.

In this institution the accomplishments received most attention, although mathematics and other sciences were taught in a way that gave the pupils a superficial knowledge of these subjects. The teacher of music, dancing and etiquette was really the most enthusiastic, as well as the most successful teacher on the staff.

When circumstances made me dependent upon my own exertions for a livelihood my imperfect knowledge of mathematics and physics, as well as my distaste for these subjects, prevented my obtaining a position in a first-class school, where my environment, as well as my salary, would have been more in keeping with my taste and needs. Therefore, I was compelled to seek employment in this out-of-the-way Seminary.

When I entered Fledding, Mrs. Bradford received me kindly, but I was not long in discovering that she and I would never be more intimate as acquaint-

ances than we were on the first day of my arrival. The chief interest of her life was to make as much money as possible out of Fledding Seminary. Her every act, word and smile was carefully calculated to assist in accomplishing that end.

Although always on friendly terms with my fellow teachers, our tastes and interests were so utterly unlike that we had very little in common, and socially I found myself alone.

Under such circumstances I began my acquaintance with Julia Seymour. A few days after my arrival at Fledding, I noticed a slight, pale girl moving about the school-room, putting things in order, assisting the younger girls with their lessons, and helping in a general way, rarely speaking unless spoken to; timid in manner and easily startled. When I inquired who she was, Mrs. Bradford replied:

"Oh, she is an orphan girl who works for her living and studies when she can."

Seeing Mrs. Bradford did not wish to continue the conversation, I sought an opportunity, later, of speaking to Julia, and asked:

"How long have you been here?"

"Six years, Miss Berkely."

I then inquired about her studies and learned she had made good use of her time, although, during the past year, she had found little leisure for study. After this I spoke to her whenever we met, and felt much drawn to her. One evening, about four weeks afterwards, I asked Julia to come to my room to prepare her lessons. She came, and when she was through studying I encouraged her to tell me of her life before she came to Fledding.

I then told her I would like her to be my friend, and asked her to come often to my room, where I would help her that she might make more rapid progress. Her pale face flushed and then turned so white I feared she was fainting. As I threw my arm around her she leaned her head against my shoulder, and after several minutes looked up in a startled way, saying:

"I beg your pardon, I do not know why I did that."

I asked, "Julia, do you think you can love me enough to be my friend?"

"Yes," she replied, "I love you very much. I have never had a friend since mamma died."

I saw she was struggling with thoughts and emotions which she could not express,—probably did not understand,—so I let her return to her room.

After that Julia frequently spent her evenings with me. She was a very apt student, marvelously quick in acquiring language, and simply devouring history. She also displayed no small artistic talent. As for mathematics and natural science, she already knew more than I ever expected to.

As we became better acquainted, her timidity passed away, and she talked with me quite freely. She was anxious to graduate and become a teacher in the Seminary; for, knowing so little of the outside world, it never occurred to her that she could teach in any other place. Not wishing to make her discontented and unhappy over what, at the time, could not be remedied, I made no suggestions regarding the future, but urged her to give special attention to such subjects as she would most need

to understand when the time came for her to seek a more promising field. Although these branches received scanty attention at the Seminary, yet, acting upon my advice, she made the very best of her opportunities; indeed, her progress surprised her instructors and class-mates.

As has been said, she was pale and slight, but, when animated, her large blue eyes were very expressive; ordinarily, however, she had a startled, apprehensive look. This was not caused by positive ill treatment, but she received so little attention from any one, led such a lonely life, and being, because of her refined and excessively sensitive nature, very shy, she instinctively shrank from notice. Her wealth of beautiful, golden hair would have curled all about her face had she not combed it back so tightly. Her movements were full of grace, and her voice, though seldom heard, was low, rich and sweet.

In winter she usually wore a gray or brown wool dress, and in summer a plainly-made print or lawn. I subsequently learned that a new dress had to serve two years as "best dress," and then was repaired and made over to last two seasons more. Her other clothing was provided on the same economical scale.

Julia was honorable, generous, and affectionate; had not her nature been so repressed she would have been a cheerful, bright, merry-hearted girl; as it was, no attempt had been made to bring out the best that was in her.

Mrs. Bradford understood her own interests well enough to make everything as pleasant as possible

for the daughters of her patrons, and always greeted them with kind words and smiles; but she had no time to spend on the friendless orphan. Julia would perform her duties well whether she was commended or not, so nothing was to be gained by expending any effort on her.

The school girls did not consider it consistent with the dignity of their positions to recognize Julia as an equal, socially; many of the teachers, drinking in the pervading spirit, looked upon it as an imposition, if not as somewhat lowering, to teach a girl whose position was almost that of a servant.

To be sure, Julia was never required to do rough work, but she had to hold herself in readiness to obey everybody's bidding and was regarded as a sort of general help. The result of all this was that her social nature and much of her intellectual power lay dormant. Had she not been a girl of unusual ability and force of character, this mode of life would most certainly have crushed her, and apparently no one would have felt the least responsibility for the ruin.

During four years Julia Seymour was my companion and friend; she kept my life from stagnation. On my part I tried to pour into her life all the brightness I could. I also endeavored to encourage her in solving many of life's problems, and to form opinions of her own. With great delight I observed her growing originality and individuality. Notwithstanding her unfortunate circumstances, she was developing into a woman of rare grace and power, which, with her natural dignity of manner, was winning for her a place of respect that even Mrs.

Bradford seemed unconsciously to accord her. She made no attempt to enter the charmed circle of school-girl society. I think she did not desire to do so at this time; but she instinctively compelled the courteous, if distant, recognition of her fellow pupils; yet in the moments of unreserve spent with me, she revealed a fun-loving nature, which, under less adverse circumstances, would have made her a leader in frolic and merriment. Her wonderful capacity for keen enjoyment might possibly have led to thoughtless and extravagant expression had the opportunity been presented.

When we had been thus together about four years, one day Julia hastily entered my room, and said:

"Esther," (I had asked her to call me so), "a gentleman has come to see me and says that my mother's cousin, Mr. Clayton, and his son Frank are both dead and that I am heir to his property! He informs me that as I am over eighteen years old, I need not choose a guardian, but may act in accordance with my own pleasure in the management of the property. What shall I do?"

"This is strange news, Julia. Would you like me to go with you and see this gentleman?"

"Oh, please do. I feel so frightened. Mr. Clayton was very rich. Mr. Markham says he has acted as his agent for many years, and would be glad to serve me in the same capacity. What shall I do?"

In the parlor we found Mr. Markham, an honest, pleasant faced man. I said to him:

"Miss Seymour is somewhat overcome by this sudden announcement which you have made to her,

and has asked me to see you. Will you be so kind as to explain the matter again?''

He briefly stated what Julia had already told me, and further informed us that Mr. Clayton had died a year ago and the courts, having no knowledge of any lawful heirs, had proceeded with the settlement of the estate. The family of the late Mrs. Clayton had recently presented themselves as heirs, but while the court was investigating their claim, he had heard from an old man who was formerly a servant in the Clayton household, that there was another branch of the family of which the only descendant was a daughter whom Mr. Clayton placed in a school several years ago. With some difficulty Mr. Markham had traced Miss Seymour to Fledding. He then named the amount of property which had fallen into her hands, and said he had come to inquire what directions she had to give, again expressing his willingness to continue as agent in managing the property.

After a few minutes' thought, I asked him if it were possible to defer answering his questions for a few days, when he readily consented to come again next week. I also asked him not to mention the object of his visit to any one in the school or town.

During the week I talked matters over with Julia and we decided it would be best to continue Mr. Markham as manager of the business for the present. In the meantime Julia would remain at Fledding until she was graduated.

On Mr. Markham's return Julia informed him of her plans, and he explained what must be done to establish her claims as Mr. Clayton's heir. In

answer to his inquiries we told him that six hundred dollars would be sufficient to meet her expenses during the year. When he expressed surprise at the smallness of the amount I told him that Miss Seymour had been accustomed to a very limited income and did not desire to make much change in her style of living before leaving Fledding. This satisfied him, and we again asked him not to mention her affairs to any one in the place, as at present she did not care to have the change in her circumstances known.

I advised this course without giving my reasons, further than that I thought it best; as she trusted me implicitly and was so bewildered by all that had taken place, she gladly followed my suggestions. I knew that if Mrs. Bradford was aware of what had occurred she would undertake to manage affairs in a way that would best further her own interests; consequently I would either have to leave Julia entirely under her influence, or things would be made very unpleasant for me and might result in my being obliged to resign my position.

In the second place, if the school girls knew that Julia had inherited a large fortune, and that she was really a descendant of one of the oldest and wealthiest families in the country, there would probably be a decided change in their attitude towards her. Julia was sufficiently bewildered without having her confusion of thought increased by a sudden and entire change in her social atmosphere.

I knew that the teachers, also, would be much influenced by Julia's altered circumstances; those who hitherto had so unwillingly received her into

their classes, would at once discover her superior capacity and attainments, and would make themselves ridiculous in their efforts to win her favor.

Besides, she had been so kept back in her studies that if she were graduated in one year she would need all her time for preparation; and the changes that would take place, were her affairs made known, would necessarily take up more or less of her time and attention.

But, more than all, until she could, to a certain extent, realize that the hollowness of much professed friendship could do her little harm beyond causing her disappointment and sorrow because most people are not so good as they would represent themselves, I did not want her mind and heart disturbed by these changes with their too apparent causes. Notwithstanding the cold neglect to which she had been subjected, there was no bitterness in her feelings towards those around her. It seemed never yet to have occurred to her that she had the slightest claim upon any one for consideration.

I was then young, yet I had been repeatedly shocked by the hardness, unkindness and indifference of people towards those who they supposed had no especial influence to retard or advance their own interests; yet these same people studied to be pleasing and generous with those from whom they desired favors, socially or otherwise.

I did not want Julia to feel the utter loathing for human nature which I felt when I realized that of the many who had once flattered me and professed so much affection for me, only a few had been my real friends—the same in adversity as in prosperity.

In the time of trouble I became painfully aware that the majority of my professed friends had cared for me only because I was a rich man's daughter, and I passed through some very dark hours. Had not the unfailing Friend stood near me all the time, saying, "Look unto Me for help," I should have renounced everything and called all false. I did not wish Julia to have such a lesson now. I wanted her to learn these things gradually, so that when life's full responsibilities came to rest upon her, she would know, without having received a great and sudden shock, that human nature is much the same everywhere, and that we need not expect much from it when misfortunes come.

At the beginning of the fall term Julia told Mrs. Bradford that she now had means to pay for her schooling until the end of the year and asked for admission as a regular pupil. Mrs. Bradford asked some questions, but in her straightforward way Julia told her she did not wish to make any explanations. Mrs. Bradford, really abashed at her gentle, lady-like reserve, and firmness of character, consented to receive her as a pupil. She was astonished, however, when Julia asked permission to retain her cheerless little room; but Julia gave as her reason, "I am not acquainted with the girls and would not feel at home with them."

During the year Julia spared no time from her studies, rarely leaving the building, except on errands, and talked little about future plans; but what she said showed that she was not simply calculating how much personal enjoyment she could derive from her wealth, but was thinking intently

how it might be used to advance the interests of others. It was evident that she purposed making the best of her life and opportunities.

Sometimes I was anxious because of her inexperience and ignorance of the world outside of Fledding; but I rejoiced to observe her increasing strength of character and originality, without any abatement of her innate modesty; and felt sure that when the test came, she would be found possessed of sufficient self-confidence to enable her to carry out what her more mature judgment should dictate was best. As yet, her natural independence was overshadowed by her implicit faith in my wisdom and her utter reliance on my judgment.

I thought it best not to advise her at present regarding her future, further than to suggest that during her first year in the active world she would be wise not to undertake any special enterprise, nor make any decided changes in business matters; but rather, to live quietly, and learn all she could about her new duties, and thus grow into fitness for her position. If she moved thus slowly and understandingly, I had no fear but she would manage wisely.

At last Graduation Day came, and Julia went to her own home, leaving me to my lonely life. Our friendship continued and strengthened with the years. She has been a blessing and help to me ever since I knew her, and I know the world has been made better because she lived in it.

With so many reminders of her existence still about me, I cannot yet realize that Julia has again passed out into a new world, again leaving me behind.

A few days ago I sat by her side as she entered into her eternal rest, and soon after looked for the last time upon the sweet face, on which rested a smile which said to me "Peace."

Her journal was placed in my hands, with the words:

"Make any use of it you may think best."

I have just finished reading it, and as it lies before me, my mind goes back over her life since I knew her, and I want to give some of its blessedness to others. So I invite the reader to share with me its hallowed pages.

CHAPTER II.

June —, 18—.—

I am twenty-one years old—rich, and my own mistress. I am so glad to be free! And yet I am so lonely. Only twenty-one years old and not a relative in the world, and hardly a friend! But for the first time in my life, I may go out and come in, rise and retire when I choose.

How beautiful it looks out of doors! I was never in the country before and feel as if I must go wild with joy. Yet it is sad to remember that I am here through the disappointments and heart-breaks of others. Now I must close this first entry in my journal. The breakfast bell is ringing, and this fresh air makes me so hungry.

June —, 18—.—

There! I promised Esther I would write my first thoughts on waking on my twenty-first birthday, and let them be the beginning of a journal from which she should have such extracts as I would be willing for her to see. Probably there will be nothing in it she may not read; but she will soon grow tired of reading such a journal as I shall write.

That first entry looks queer and reads queerer, but it tells just how I felt yesterday morning, and I feel just the same to-day.

Monday night, about nine o'clock, I arrived at my new home—the first *home* I have had since I

was six years old. It was dark, rainy and dreary, but as the carriage drove up the hall door opened and a flood of light poured out. Mrs. Tate, the housekeeper, a kind, elderly Scotch woman, was there with a warm welcome and kind inquiries. Was I wet and tired? Was I not very hungry? Dinner was ready. She took me to a bright, cozy room, removed my wraps, and then conducted me to the dining room. I would not allow myself even to think of the place as mine. I said, to-morrow, *to-morrow*, I shall begin to live; to-morrow I will take possession of my own.

So, after dinner I unpacked a valise, and then told Mrs. Tate we would do no more until morning. I slept, oh, so soundly, and did not waken until long after the sun had risen. I sprang up, ran to the window, drew the curtains and looked out upon the green grass, leafy trees and lovely flowers, washed, refreshed and beautified by the rain of the previous evening. Beyond, to the north, lay Silver Creek flashing in the bright sunlight. How cool and invigorating the air, how fragrant and delightful the odors! And this home was all mine! I was free to do with it all just as I chose; could stay here as long as I wished.

It was the first holiday of my life, and I spent it running through the garden, wandering through the stables and barns, and roaming in the adjacent woods. My first birthday in the country—and my own home—shall I ever forget it?

This morning I received a letter from Mrs. Howard, Esther's friend, which I must copy into my journal:

M—, June —, 18—.

Dear Miss Seymour:—I wanted to write this letter in time for you to receive it the first day you spent in Sunset Park, but it will be too late for that.

I wish to express to you my joy that all this good fortune has come to you, and my sympathy with you in all the happiness and responsibility which it brings.

Will you allow one who feels a deep interest in you to counsel you concerning the new life upon which you are entering? You have riches at your command; all that money can procure may be yours. It is right that you should enjoy life; but will you not consider well, during these first months, what will be the best use you can make of your life and of your wealth? So few rich people think seriously about this important matter and thus miss the choicest blessings. Will you not endeavor to so consecrate your life and your money that they may be used for the glory of God and the good of the world? As you look forward to the time when you must lay aside all that belongs to this world, do you not desire to leave behind you the record of a life so spent that it may be a worthy example to other young people?

In order to do this, the all-important thing is to begin right. After business habits and all things connected with a rich person's life have become fixed, influences, circumstances and environments make it difficult to change. Whether you will live for yourself alone, or to benefit others as far as may be in your power, will be settled within the next few years. I know you will think of these things and

pray for divine help and guidance in ordering the affairs of your life.

I hope sometime to meet you again, and it will give me great pleasure if I may occasionally hear from you. Praying that all good things may be yours, I remain,

Your affectionate friend,

CORDELIA HOWARD.

How very thoughtful in Mrs. Howard to write me this letter now! I have replied, thanking her for it and assuring her I would endeavor to profit by this kind and timely advice.

I owe to Esther my pleasant acquaintance with Mrs. Howard. What, indeed, do I not owe to her? Through Mrs. Howard I learned much of Esther's history previous to her coming to Fledding. When Esther was ten years old, her father, then a rich man in ——, employed Mrs. Howard as governess. She remained in the family five years, when she married and removed to Boston. Mrs. Howard never tired of telling about Esther's good qualities, and considered her a brilliant student, thoughtful beyond her years, and of a remarkably strong, upright character. She was a bright, gleesome, spirited girl and of such a gentle, amiable disposition that her father called her his "Sunbeam."

She grew to be a tall, graceful, dignified young lady, with masses of dark brown hair in which the sunshine seemed hiding; and dark brown eyes that spoke wise and beautiful things, although at times they danced with merriment, for she keenly appreciated the humorous side of the happenings of

life. She was educated and moved in the highest social circles, of which she was the ornament and pride,—but was not engrossed with her own selfish enjoyment. There were none so lowly that she was not ready at the first opportunity to expend her best effort to put them at their ease and make them happy.

When Esther was twenty years old her father died, leaving his affairs unsettled. Nothing was left for his widow and children. Besides Esther, who was the eldest of the family, there were two boys, sixteen and eighteen years of age, and two daughters, one twelve and the other fourteen years old.

Esther had received an education befitting an accomplished young lady rather than one that would enable her to provide for herself and those dependent upon her. However, she had considerable talent as an artist, and as before her father's death her slightest wish was gratified if possible, she had received the best instruction to be secured. Esther was also a fine linguist, speaking French, German and Italian almost as fluently as English; she had also made a special study of history and the literature of the languages with which she was familiar.

Her knowledge and accomplishments were now put to good use. Having settled her mother in a small cottage, the rent of which it taxed the resources of the family to meet, Esther accepted a position as teacher at Fledding. The boys obtained situations as clerks on low salaries, and the younger girls attended school.

Esther has been at Fledding for five years; the

elder brother, Richard, has proved himself a successful salesman; the younger brother, Edward, has not succeeded so well, as, could he have completed his education, his tastes would have led him to choose a profession. Nevertheless, he is a conscientious worker, and year by year his salary has been increased. Clara, the second daughter, was graduated from high school last year and has a position in a village school. Henrietta, the youngest daughter, is still in school.

Although it has been a great disappointment to the family that Richard and Edward could not go through college, as their father had planned, yet it is a great satisfaction to the children that they are able to provide for their mother a comfortable home. If they cannot supply her with luxuries, she has now, at least, to undergo no hardship, as was the case during the first two years after their father's death.

Mrs. Berkely is a sweet, patient woman, who, amid grief and misfortune, has encouraged her children in their struggle with the world, by always making the best of circumstances, never complaining, but constantly reminding them of God's care. Her subdued but cheerful manner, her contented smile and hopeful words have helped them over many hard places.

Ill health has prevented her assisting in the labor necessary to provide their support; but her children always assure her that she has been their inspiration, declaring that they would have given up the struggle long ago had they not, day after day, on returning from their work, found her seated in her easy chair, with a bright look and a kind

word of welcome. Mrs. Howard frequently remarked, "With such a mother to instruct her by precept and example, it is not surprising that Esther has become the noble young woman that she is."

Through all their adversities, Mrs. Howard has been the unfailing friend of the Berkelys, taking an especial interest in Esther, and rendering every assistance the independent, spirited family would permit.

June —, 18—.—

I must take more time to write in this journal the events of each day as they occur.

When I rose yesterday morning I carefully examined my room and its furnishings for the first time. It is quite a contrast to the little seven-by-nine bedroom I occupied at Fledding. How plainly I can see the faded carpet and narrow bed, the tiny old wash-stand, the cracked pitcher with its time-colored bowl; and the tiny mirror which made my face look all awry! And those pegs on the wall that held my entire stock of dresses, wraps—and one lone hat! While there in the corner, serving as a seat, was a small box which held all my other possessions.

Well, as I said, I looked about my large and elegantly furnished apartments and examined the adjoining dressing room, finding that my trunk had been unpacked and the contents stored away in the capacious closets and drawers with which my rooms are so abundantly supplied. My wardrobe takes up very little space as yet. Parsons, my maid—Oh! I forgot to say that I have a maid! It gives me such a queer feeling to think of it. When Mr. Markham sent his clerk to Fledding to see what I would like

to have done for me at Sunset Park, and what assistance I would require on the journey, he asked if he should send a maid to accompany me. I caught my breath and answered "No." He then said he would send her directly to the Park, where she would await my coming. On the evening of my arrival, feeling so uncertain about everything, I told Mrs. Tate if she would kindly give me such assistance as I might need, I would prefer to see no one else that night. I thought no more about it until the next morning when Parsons came and proffered her services to help me dress. Imagine my amazement! Well, she has busied herself as best she could. Never having had a maid, I do not quite know what to do with her.

Yesterday morning Mrs. Tate asked me if I would not go over the house and receive from her an inventory of the furnishings, linen and plate. I replied:

"I do not care to look at the things just yet. I want to drive out to the fields and over the country to-day, and see what everything is like."

"But I feel anxious lest anything should happen, and then you may feel dissatisfied with me."

"No, I would not," was my reply, but she seemed so worried that I concluded to please her, thinking it would take only an hour or two,—but it took all day!

First we went to the kitchen, and there the cook, in a brand new calico dress, attended by the kitchen maids, displayed her store of cleanly-kept kitchen utensils. Then, in the dining-room the table maid showed me enough silverware to furnish a store. Such beautiful things in solid silver! I enjoyed

this. When we had looked at the china and table linen, behold, luncheon was ready. By the time we had examined the parlors, sleeping apartments, stores of linen, noted the furnishings and inspected the servants' rooms it was six o'clock, and too late for my drive. I had worked very hard all day and was glad to rest, leaving everything else for the morrow.

June —, 18—.—

This is Friday morning, and I must write everything up to date. Tuesday, being so warm, I wore my lawn dress, and in the evening found it was much torn and soiled, the result of my prowling around out of doors all day. I have soiled my other thin gown, and to-day had to wear my traveling suit, which Parsons had brushed and repaired.

My wardrobe must be replenished. I was inclined to laugh when Esther remarked that I would find my wardrobe too limited, but could provide myself with whatever I needed when I was at leisure from school duties. But Esther knew better than I, as she always does.

So, yesterday, having donned the traveling dress, I drove miles and miles. I have seen every field I own in this part of the world, and looked up the country generally. It is ever so much nicer than in town. I made the time spent profitable as well as pleasant by learning many things about the value of land, the machinery used in farming and crops raised. The men working in the fields were very obliging and willing to explain everything. The overseer said:

"Well, Miss, we must look sharp, for I see you are going to be a good farmer."

"I am sure," I replied, "everything is going on well, so you need not be afraid of me."

"Yes, but you are one that will find out things for yourself. Mr. Clayton always sent his agent to look after matters. He was a city man and knew very little about farming, so his plans were not always the best."

"Well, I will try to be a good farmer. Where do you live?"

"Down there by the school-house."

Having found out where the other men lived, I came home very tired.

This morning Mrs. Tate asked me, "Do you know your face is quite sunburned? You will spoil your complexion going out in the middle of the day this hot weather."

"Oh, Mrs. Tate, I never was in the country before, and I feel as if I could not stay in the house."

"But you will tire yourself out, and we shall have you sick; then you will have to stay in the house."

"Well, on Sunday I will stay in the house all day and read and be quiet."

"Will you not go to church?"

"I did not know there was a church here."

"Oh, yes, there is a Methodist church in the village where you got off the cars. It is only two miles away."

"Is there? I drove down the road at the side of the village yesterday, so I do not know what is there. Well, I will see,—if it is not too hot. I

have no more thin dresses, and yesterday I was very uncomfortable in this serge."

"Miss Seymour, do you not think you would better have some nice older lady as a companion for you? Please do not think me presuming,—do not be displeased, but you are too young to be here alone."

"Why, Mrs. Tate, I am not alone! You and all these other people are here. What can I want any one else for?"

"But, my dear young lady, it is not proper for one in my position to advise you."

"But why should I have any one to advise me? What would one advise me about?"

"Young people are likely to make mistakes, and to be misunderstood. I think, if your mother were here, she would have objected to your spending last Thursday alone out in the Park and woods."

"But why? There was nothing to harm me! I am not afraid of the people who work for me; they are all very kind."

"All that may be true, but a young lady ought not to get herself talked about. You were out all day yesterday, and no responsible person with you."

"But why should people talk? I was only seeing the country, looking at the fields and finding out things I ought to know."

"Yes, it was all right, only it looks better for you to have some older person with you. Some of the men were saying that you were a bonny lass, and very clever for your years, but you needed some one to look after you or you would get into trouble."

Now, is not that a great idea! When I am so

happy because I am so free and no one to say "Do this" and "Do that," why need some one come to make me miserable? Besides, I do not know a single person, such as Mrs. Tate has in mind. I did want Esther to come with me,—still she is only a little older than I am, athough she is ever so much wiser. I do wish I knew some competent person to tell me what is best

To-day I drove to the city to do some shopping. Parsons went with me. Besides a number of new dresses, it seems I needed half a dozen pairs of gloves, as many pairs of shoes, and an unlimited supply of ribbons, laces, as well as two more hats. Dear me! Wouldn't Mrs. Bradford be amazed if she saw me in possession of such a lot of things? I left the dresses with a dressmaker whom Parsons recommended. We were in the city the whole day, and came home tired out. I had spent more than the cost of all my clothes since mamma died.

CHAPTER III.

June —, 18—.—

It is nine o'clock in the morning. I promised to write to Esther at the end of the week and have just finished the letter. She will have many wise things to say about what I have told her, so I will copy the letter in my journal for reference when her answer comes.

Sunset Park, June 29th, 18—.

Dear Esther:—It seems a long time since I saw you. I so much wish I could be with you to-day, and tell you all I think and feel, and then listen to what you would say to me. Since that cannot be, I must content myself with writing.

The accompanying copy of my journal will tell you how I have spent the week. You will also want to know about my journey.

After bidding you good-bye I looked back and saw you standing at the door. I can see your face yet; it came with me all along the journey, and looks at me kindly as I write; it almost seems as if I should hear you speak. We soon came to the end of the familiar drive from Fledding to the station, —my ticket was bought and my trunk checked. When once on the train, the fact that I was fairly launched into the great world, troubled me. Then the thought came that Fledding was behind and home before me. Except for the regret that I was parting with you, I was well content that it should be so.

Soon I began to notice my surroundings, and found we were out in the country—just then passing through a grove, and I hoped there would be plenty of woods about my new home. Presently we were passing fields and farm houses, all looking so quiet and pleasant that I was glad the home I was going to was in the country. Further on was a little town where there was quite a bustle, people getting on and off the cars.

It was now about eight o'clock. As we went on, fields, woods, rivers, creeks and hills diversified the scene. On a country road I saw a number of children who were evidently going to school, as they were carrying books, lunch baskets and pails. They were barefooted, the girls wearing calico sunbonnets, and all seemed very happy.

While waiting to change cars at crossing B——, I thought about how often I had heard you speak of the weary hour and a half you always spent there when going away for your vacation.

In the afternoon it grew quite dark and cloudy and soon after began to rain. The gloomy evening made me very lonely.

Many people on the train were very social and seemed to get acquainted with each other; one or two spoke kindly to me, and a lady offered to share her luncheon. I thanked her and told her I had my dinner at J——. I am so unused to strangers it gives me quite a start when they speak to me; my face burns and I do not know what to say.

At four o'clock in the afternoon came another hour of waiting to make connections with a belated train; all these trains are very slow. At last we

reached Hampton. My heart beat hard when I rose to leave the train. I was quite stiff, too, from sitting so long. It was quite dark on the station platform, as the only light was a lantern carried by the station master. As soon as I was off the train the conductor called out "All aboard," and the cars disappeared in the darkness. Just then a man carrying an open umbrella stepped up, inquiring:

"Is this Miss Seymour?"

I answered, "Yes."

"The carriage is here waiting for you."

When I was seated in the carriage, I asked;

"Will my trunk be sent to-night?"

"Yes, Miss, the wagon is here to carry it."

After a two-mile drive through the mud, rain and darkness, we reached Sunset Park. You will learn the rest from my journal.

Parsons is very impatient for my new dresses to come. She, herself, has made the blue lawn I brought from Fledding into a very pretty frock, which she pronounces perfect. Parsons seems to be in her element when arranging my gowns or assisting at my toilet. She is very anxious to have me look nice, but try as she will, she can never make me handsome. I never supposed there was anything unusual about my hair, but Parsons greatly admires it, and it pleases her to call it golden. She takes great pains with it, and sometimes seems disappointed that I am not more enthusiastic over the results of her efforts. As there has been no one to care particularly, I have never given much attention to my appearance, beyond trying to look tidy, which I always thought

to be a duty. However, as Mrs. Tate and Parsons seem interested in the matter, I can at least try to please them, especially since Parsons takes all the trouble upon herself.

Speaking of Mrs. Tate reminds me of what she said about my having an older person with me as a companion. I do not just fancy the idea, but would like your advice. Esther, I need you so much, and cannot understand why you did not come when I so wanted you. I am sure it would have been pleasanter for you than to spend your vacation at that little farm house. So far as my coming here alone to learn to depend upon myself is concerned, I do not see how your going off there and my having another person here for a companion will help matters.

Please tell me all you think I ought to know. You are my only friend, and I so long to hear from you. Your loving

JULIA.

Evening.—After breakfast this morning, I received a letter from Mr. Markham, saying that he and the lawyer who has always attended to Mr. Clayton's legal matters are coming Monday to place before me such statements as are necessary in order that I may understand the value of my estates, the amount of money invested in business enterprises, and cash placed to my credit in the bank; also, to inform me as to the character of the various enterprises in which a portion of my money is invested.

It appalls me to think I have so much property. I do not know what to do with it—am afraid I may

not use it wisely; then, too, Mrs. Howard's letter has impressed me still more deeply as to my responsibility. If I had just this place, I think I could manage it well and enjoy it too When I told Mrs. Tate these people were coming, she asked:

"What arrangements do you want made?"

"Arrangements for what?"

"What arrangements do you want made for their entertainment? What rooms will they have? How long will they remain?"

"Oh,—why—just what you think best. You know better than I do."

"No, I want you to decide these things; you are the mistress, and these gentlemen are your guests. I cannot settle such matters, but I will do whatever you may wish."

So we looked over the rooms, selected the ones to be used and arranged about the meals. When this was done Mrs. Tate turned to me with a very grave look, and said:

"My dear, I suppose Mr. Clayton trusted these men who are coming or he would not have employed them. Please do not be offended if I say that it is best to be careful about business affairs; do not consent to any arrangements until you understand them and they suit you."

"I am afraid there is a great deal to understand, and I am very ignorant about such matters."

"Poor lamb! You are quite alone in the world, and great responsibilities rest upon you. But you have an honest face, and I know by your bonnie blue eyes that you have a good heart. Trust in the Lord and He will help you."

Such a great sense of loneliness rushed upon me. I felt that my inexperience placed me at a great disadvantage. If I only had my mother! Throwing my arms about Mrs. Tate's neck, I burst into tears; she held me close to her and said:

"There, there, dear! I did not mean to make you cry."

"No, no, you did not; but I have no friends,—nobody ever cared for me but you and Esther Berkely."

"Why, how is that? Did you not have friends at school?"

"Oh, I was just a poor orphan girl, and no one ever talked much to me,—only Esther."

"But,—Mrs. Bradford I think you called her—what about her?"

"She was always busy, and only had time to tell me what she wanted me to do."

"What about the girls? Did you not join them in their amusements?"

"Why, you know I was poor and had to work for my board and clothes. Fledding is called a seminary, but Mrs. Bradford conducts it on the plan of European boarding-schools and receives pupils of all ages. There are some small girls, and a number of children who attend as day pupils are taught with them. I was a sort of nursery teacher and general help to the matron, or any one who needed me,—in a certain sense I was a servant, and the girls did not care to have me with them. When I was not working I spent my leisure studying, for I wanted to graduate."

"Did you have no holidays when you could go out and make friends outside?"

"The holidays were the busiest times, for then many of the other helpers were away, and I had to assist in getting things in order by the time the next term began."

"Did Mr. Clayton's family never see you, nor write to you?"

"No."

"Did they know how you were living?"

"I suppose so, for Mr. Clayton took me there and arranged that the money mamma left me should pay for my board, clothes and education until I was fifteen years old; after that I was to work for my support and instruction."

"Why did you not live at Mr. Clayton's?"

"After mamma died, I lived at Mr. Clayton's a year. Mrs. Clayton said I made her nervous because I crept around so slowly and never looked happy; her daughters, Catherine and Maude, said they were ashamed of me, I looked so dull in my black dress and always said such stupid things when spoken to; so they did not want me."

"Poor child! You have had a hard life; but now you have all poor Mr. Clayton's property."

"It is very sad that all his children should have died; he loved them so much. I believe he himself died quite suddenly, or perhaps I would not have been here."

"Yes, the shock of Mr. Francis' death was too great. He had apoplexy and never spoke again. His will had been made some time before, giving his property to his son; there were, however, handsome legacies left to different members of his wife's family."

"Had he known Frank would die, I suppose he would have left it all to them."

"Perhaps,—yet it is right you should have it, for the money came from your great grandfather. I have heard that he disinherited your grandmother; and as there were but herself and her brother, John Clayton, he had all the property."

"That is true. Grandmamma displeased her parents by marrying an artist who was poor."

"What was your grandfather's name?"

"Edgar Whittington."

"And your father was a lawyer."

"Yes. He had only money enough to enable him to complete his law studies. He was graduated from college before his father's death. I was only one year old when papa died. He was getting on very fast with his profession, but had not saved any money, so mamma and I went to live with Grandpapa Whittington."

"Do you remember your grandpapa?"

"No, he died when I was three years old. We remained with grandmamma in her pretty little cottage of six rooms, besides the small one for the servant."

"That was very little room for four people."

"Yes, but grandmamma managed well. The kitchen was only ten feet square, but in the large basement was a laundry, cellar, cistern and many nicely furnished closets. Besides the kitchen there were two rooms, each fourteen feet square. These rooms, which had folding doors between them, were furnished like double parlors. In the back parlor were some very handsome book-cases, containing

choice books. In this room, also, were grandmamma's rosewood writing desk and a beautiful round, pearl-inlaid table, from which, when it was to be used as a dining table, we removed books and ornaments."

"So you made the rooms serve as dining-room, parlor and library."

"Yes, and they were very pretty."

Mrs. Tate's interest was so genuine that it was a pleasure to tell her all I knew of my family. I described to her how daintily and happily my grandparents lived in the two small and scantily furnished rooms in which they began their married life. I even told her of their close economy—keeping no servant and deciding to buy furniture only as they were able to purchase something good; so, as they could get the money, they bought a piece at a time, always choosing the very best. In this way, what they had was always excellent, and in a few years they furnished their little cottage beautifully.

Mrs. Tate seemed so pleased to have me confide in her that I also told her of the bric-a-brac grandmamma had when she began housekeeping, gifts from old-time friends; among them three fine china cups and saucers, and four exquisite china plates; and that, as grandpapa had some choice pieces of silver that had belonged to his mother, they got on until they were able to procure more.

"Your mother was an only child?"

"Yes, and they took great pains with her education. She was a fine musician."

"I have asked a great many questions. Please excuse me. There is that about you which draws

my heart towards you, and I shall soon love you as if you were my own bairn."

"Oh, I like to tell you these things. I never told them to any one before, except Esther; but I think them over and over, having no one to talk to, and thinking so much of what mamma used often to tell me, makes me remember all so well, I suppose."

"Well, dear, do not forget what I told you about the agent and lawyer who are coming Monday. I want you to let them see that you are a young lady, not a thoughtless, frivolous girl; and that it is your intention to look into the whys and wherefores of things; so that when you do decide upon any course they will know that you have good reason for doing so."

"Thank you, Mrs. Tate, for your advice. I will try to follow it."

I do not know anything to say to these men who are coming on Monday. Mrs. Tate says I must take my place at the table as hostess, be polite and kind, and all will be well.

As to the business interview that I dread so much, since I am so ignorant about such matters, I will not assume that I know more than I do, but will simply listen attentively and ask questions when I do not understand; if I am uncertain what I ought to do, I will exercise my privilege of deferring a decision. Esther said that for this first year I must not be in a hurry to do things, nor make rash decisions; but just grow into my position.

July —, 18—.—

To-day, Mrs. Tate, Parsons and I went to church. I wore my pretty brown dress and

hat to match that Esther selected for me last week. That seems a long time ago.

This Methodist Church is the queerest church I ever saw. It is just an oblong room, with the seats all in rows facing the preacher, and two seats on either side of the pulpit. There is but one desk, and from that the preacher read, prayed and preached. He wore neither robe nor surplice, but just an ordinary suit of black clothes. It was very unlike the Episcopal service at Fledding. No prayer books were used, the preacher simply standing up and reading a hymn, which was sung by the congregation and the choir, who occupied the seats at the left of the pulpit; after which he read a chapter from the Bible, and offered extemporaneous prayer; this was followed by another hymn. The minister then preached a sermon, which was also extemporaneous; after again offering prayer, the last hymn was sung and we were dismissed with the benediction.

The sermon was certainly a strange discourse. The preacher talked about having in our own hearts the evidence that we are saved. He seemed to mean that unless we have this we are not Christians. I have no witness in *my* heart that I am saved; I was baptized when a baby and confirmed when ten years old. They called me a Christian, and I supposed I was.

Mrs. Tate is a Methodist, and she says the Methodists believe in conversion, by which they mean a change of heart. I asked her:

"What do you mean by a 'change of heart'?"

"Why, all are sinners, and unless they repent

and receive forgiveness for their sins they will be lost."

"Are my sins forgiven? Do you think I am saved?"

"I do not know; only the Lord can tell you that."

"How will he tell me? I have been baptized, and I have been confirmed, so I am a Christian. Are not all Christians saved?"

"All saved persons are Christians, but being baptized or confirmed cannot save us."

"What then?"

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

"I do believe on Him."

"Hast thou saving faith in Christ?"

"I do not know."

"When you know that, you are saved."

"But *how can* I know?"

"Ask Him."

I do not understand all this. I would like to know that I am saved, but do not see how I can *know* it until I die. Then, of course, I shall know, for if I am saved I shall be in heaven, and if I am lost I shall be in torment. I think these Methodists must be mistaken, for God does not talk with men now, as in olden times. So *how* can I know? I think as soon as I hear from Esther I will write to her in regard to conversion.

CHAPTER IV.

July —, 18—.—

Mr. Markham and Mr. Yates came this morning. The former is a large, well-proportioned man, about fifty years old, with an intelligent face. When he came to Fledding I was so bewildered I did not think much about his appearance or how I liked him; but he seems a man one might trust. Mr. Yates is tall, and his thin hair and beard nearly all gray; I should judge him to be about sixty-five years old. As yet he makes no impression on me. He has been Mr. James Clayton's lawyer since his father died, and had been Mr. John Clayton's lawyer for fourteen years. I received them in the parlor, and to my inquiries about their health and about their journey from the west, Mr. Yates replied briefly, but politely. Mr. Markham was more communicative, and after we sat down to luncheon began asking questions.

"Do you like Sunset Park, Miss Seymour?"

"Yes, very much, thank you."

"And what have you been doing?"

"Oh, I have looked over the house and its contents, seen all the fields belonging to the place, and driven about the country; I also have spent a day in the city."

He gave me a quick, inquiring look, and said:

"So you have been inspecting your farms?"

"I was never in the country before and wanted to see what it is like."

"Well, what do you think of it?"

"I think I should like to be a farmer. I learned a great deal the day I was out."

"May I ask what in particular you learned?"

"The men told me many things about the machinery, farming implements, crops and stock, and how they do the work."

"Humph! So you talked with the laborers?"

"Oh, yes, I talked with almost everybody. In a day or two I am going to see their wives; I want to know all about how they live, and everything connected with the place."

"Remember, you must be careful not to let them make you believe all they tell you;—one has to look out for these fellows. They always represent things to their own advantage."

"I think they told me nothing wrong, for we only talked about the crops they had in, how they managed them, and the different sorts of machinery and tools used on the farms."

"Oh, yes, yes, I know how they talk when they find any one to listen to them; but you would better not let them think you pay much attention to what they say."

"Well, if I am in doubt about what they tell me, I have only to notice what others are doing and consult them. There are a great many small farmers in the neighborhood."

"But you will not have leisure to give such close attention to agriculture. If you are like most young ladies, you will soon have social duties that will take up most of your time."

"I think I shall stay right here for a year, at least."

"What! Bury yourself here? That will never do. You must go to New York and see your mansion there, one of the finest in the city. They will never get you back here after you have seen that."

"I am in no hurry to go to the city. It is quiet here and I want to stay until I am rested from all the years I have worked so hard."

"You know, you will have to go to New York to see what is to be done with that residence. It is shut up now, and all has been left just as it was when Mr. Clayton died."

"I will think it over, and before you leave will let you know when I think it best to come to the city to attend to it."

Mr. Markham gave me another quick, surprised look, as we arose from the table and returned to the parlor.

The gentlemen spent the afternoon driving out inspecting the farms, the park and woods; on their return they went through the barns and stables.

At dinner they talked about home and foreign affairs. As I know very little about these matters, I could not take much part in the conversation. Had they been speaking on historical subjects I should have been quite at home, for Esther taught me history. One day she astonished me by saying I was her brightest pupil in that subject. How gratified I felt! It was the first compliment I had ever received. I must take papers and magazines and inform myself of daily events.

After dinner we had some music, and the gentlemen complimented me as a musician. I fear they are mistaken, for Miss Miller, the music teacher,

never looked pleased when she gave me my music lessons, and once I heard her say:

"I did not engage to teach music to girls like Julia."

I tried my best to learn, only I had so little time to practice. This is a good piano, and I think I must use it more. Mamma intended I should be a musician like herself. Poor Mamma! If she were only here how happy we should be!

To-morrow morning after breakfast comes the dreaded interview.

July —, 18—.—

After breakfast, Mr. Markham, Mr. Yates and myself, repaired to the library. The room hardly deserves the name. There are a few old and rather mouldy books in the cases, the carpet is faded, in some places even worn through; the writing desk is shabby, and the few leather-covered chairs and sofa are much dilapidated. But the room had been well swept and dusted, so it was clean. I shall give this library early attention, hoping to make it at least a comfortable study.

Mr. Markham read over a list of the mills and factories that have fallen into my hands; stated the several amounts of money invested in banks and wholesale houses, and I found I had a small interest even in shipping. He also presented a paper showing how many tenement houses I own, and another containing a statement of the amount deposited to my credit in the bank, from which I may draw for general expenses during the year; it seems, too, that I have considerable real estate besides this at Sunset Park.

Mr. Markham then proceeded to say that he thought all business enterprises were going on well, except some of the mills. He advised selling one of these, suggested certain changes in the management of two others, and asked if I approved of the same. I felt terribly embarrassed by the question, for I knew nothing about the matter. So I said:

"Mr. Markham, I am quite inexperienced in the conduct of business, and know nothing whatever about mills. However, it seems to me, that until I can understand it more thoroughly it will be best to make no changes, except in cases where there are losses instead of gains. Owing to my present lack of knowledge, I see no way but for me to rely upon your judgment in this matter. I hope soon to have a better understanding of my affairs."

He stared at me a moment, and said, "Very well, I will then consider myself authorized to proceed with the mills as I have suggested."

"Mr. Markham, will you please leave those statements with me so I can study them at my leisure?"

"I cannot spare these papers; I have no duplicates and need them to guide me in the conduct of your affairs."

"At least let me have them during the time you are here."

"Now, Miss Seymour, that is all very well for a pastime at present; but really you can employ your time to better advantage than in poring over these dull figures. You will soon grow tired of the business and throw it all back on my hands anyway, and you may as well save yourself and me the extra trouble."

"I should like to have the papers a few hours."

"Tut! tut! You are only a school girl. What can you understand about such matters?"

Nevertheless, he arranged the papers and handed them to me. I could hardly breathe, I was so frightened at my own boldness. I don't care! I intend to be mistress of my own affairs, and not a mere figurehead.

Then Mr. Yates produced a number of contracts and other business agreements, for me to sign. He read them over rapidly, and then placed them before me.

"Why, I have not understood any of these papers!" I objected. "I must read them over by myself before I sign them."

There was not the least change in the expression of his face when I said this; he simply turned to Mr. Markham, as much as to say:

"Well, what will you have done?"

Mr. Markham stood up, folded his arms behind him, and, looking at me, exclaimed:

"Miss Seymour, it is impossible for you to understand these things! It will be better for you to be guided by us, and trust to our doing what is best."

"I have no reason to do otherwise than trust you, and I expect to be guided by you, at least until I can guide myself. Still, I want to understand those papers, and until I do, I cannot sign them."

"But there is no time. It is now two o'clock—luncheon time—and we must leave here to-morrow morning."

"Very well, leave them with me and I will send them to you by post."

"But the other parties to these contracts are waiting for them and must have them immediately."

"Then please let me have them this afternoon. I will try to get through with them in time for you to take them back to-morrow."

"But there are other matters to be placed before you which must be attended to before we go."

"I am sorry I did not know how much there is to understand. I ought to have been at work on this yesterday and last evening."

"We could not have attended to it yesterday, as we had other matters to look after."

Luncheon was now ready, and we returned to the dining-room. I was hot, flustered and awkward. Mr. Markham was treating me like a child, and I was not pleased. Surely I had a right to know about my own affairs, and I was quite resolved to do so. I think he is perfectly honest and will conduct the business wisely, but I must understand things. If Mr. Markham should die I never could get things straight. At the table he stirred me up still more by saying:

"Now, Miss Seymour, don't trouble your pretty head about things you can't understand. Wait until you get a husband and he will see to things for you."

Between fright and indignation I was trembling, and could hardly control my voice as I replied:

"I do not expect to have a husband very soon, and consider it my duty to understand my own affairs, and think myself perfectly capable of doing so."

"Oh, now, you must not feel provoked at an old business man for advising you to let hard work

alone, and have a good time like other young ladies. I know that it is the fashion for them to be very wise and capable, and to play at being business women, but they generally do more harm than good."

"Well, if I am not capable of understanding my business affairs, I will sell all the property except Sunset Park, withdraw my money from other business enterprises and deposit the proceeds in banks. Surely I shall be able to compute the interest as it accrues. I would not be altogether unhappy if Sunset Park were my only possession."

After that little more was said until we returned to the library, when they presented a contract for me to sign by which I would agree to employ Mr. Markham as my agent for five years. It also contained a statement as to the amount of salary he should receive and bound us both to certain obligations. I said:

"Mr. Markham, I am willing to enter into such an agreement for one year, but not for five."

"What is your objection?"

He looked not only surprised, but embarrassed

"Nothing,—only at the end of a year you may prefer not to attend to matters for me; and I may find it better to make a change."

He twisted around on the old chair, said "Ahem!" two or three times, and then continued:

"Mr. Clayton always entered into five-years agreements with me, and I supposed, of course, you would wish to do the same."

"No, I do not; you and Mr. Clayton understood and suited each other; we do not know how it will be with us."

Mr. Yates also produced a five years' contract, remarking:

"I, too, as the old contracts expired, entered into a five years' agreement with both Mr. James Clayton and his father. What is your wish in my case, Miss Seymour?"

"The same as in that of Mr. Markham. I am willing to sign a contract with the privilege of renewal at the end of the year if both parties are satisfied."

Mr. Markham inquired:

"Have you any other legal adviser or agent in mind?"

"None. I shall certainly give the preference to you and Mr. Yates, if all parties are satisfied."

"Who advised you to this course?"

"No one. I did not know it would be necessary to make such contracts. I have resolved to undertake little more this year than to try to understand my new responsibilities and to grow into my position. Therefore I do not wish to bind myself to anything beyond this one year. I cannot sign this contract as it is."

"You will find many of the contracts read this morning are for five years,—some for ten years."

"That is why I want to study them and discuss them with you. I suppose business interests make such contracts necessary, but your business relations with me do not require it. You will proceed just the same this year as though the contract were for five years; if at the end of the year all is satisfactory, we can renew for five years; if not, there will be no embarrassment."

"Are you led to this decision because I have advised you not to take upon yourself business anxieties?"

"Not at all. I was provoked at the things you said, but thought you were advising me to do what you believed to be best. You do not understand me yet, that is all. I am only carrying out my policy of not committing myself to more than is necessary for this one year."

"Then I suppose it will have to be so. One other matter,—do you not intend to engage an older lady as a companion and chaperon? It seems hardly proper for you to live here alone with servants."

"I am considering the matter."

"Should you desire to engage such a lady, I know of one I shall be happy to recommend," added Mr. Yates.

"Thank you. If I decide to have her I will let you know."

I did not consider it necessary to tell him I had already written to Esther on the subject, and would prefer to leave this matter in her hands to arrange.

It was now five o'clock. Taking the statements and contracts to my room, I began copying them into a blank book, working diligently until the dinner bell rang. During dinner the conversation turned upon the Clayton family, and Mr. Markham incidentally remarked that Mr. Frank Clayton had taken a thorough law course. His father had earnestly desired him to do so, believing it would be of great advantage to him in conducting the affairs of the estates, and business generally. I said:

"Indeed, I think it would. Why could not I get some law books and read them? Surely, it would help me to understand much of what I now know so little."

Mr. Markham returned: "There is a fine set of law books in the splendid library in your New York house. By the way,—when do you intend coming to the city to see the place? It needs early attention."

"I am planning to come in about two weeks."

"Well, I will have the establishment in running order. Whatever additional arrangements are needed can be attended to afterward. When you have acquainted yourself with the place and have things to your mind, you can retire to some summer resort until cool weather, and then return to take up your residence there permanently. It is a very fine house and the appointments always have been unexceptionable."

"Oh, I am only coming to see the place and what is there, and decide what is to be done with it during the year I spend here."

"I never supposed you would think of spending your winter here. I recommended your coming to the Park because it was on your way to New York, and could be put in readiness sooner than any other place,—and also convenient for Mr. Yates and myself on our return from California. By the way, I wonder why Mr. Clayton placed you in that out of the way school, with so many superior educational institutions in the East! Why did he take you to that sleepy old town?"

"I do not suppose any of the schools you mention

would have taken me on the terms he was able to make at Fledding."

"How was that?"

When I told him how I was situated at Fledding he seemed much surprised and hastened to say:

"I supposed Mr. Clayton kept you in school. Did he never help you beyond paying the two hundred dollars a year until you were fifteen years old?"

"He did not pay that. When grandpapa died he left us the cottage we lived in and five thousand dollars, with which we bought two houses that we rented. The next year grandmamma died and mamma fell ill. Grandmamma's illness and death, her own long and serious illness, and our living expenses, involved mamma in debt. To pay this she was obliged to sell the two rented houses, and supplementing the interest from the remaining three thousand dollars by teaching music, she managed to obtain an income of four hundred dollars a year. When I was six years old our cottage burned, and after three years, during which time we were both sick a great deal, mamma died, leaving but one thousand dollars. With this Mr. Clayton paid for my board and schooling at Mrs. Bradford's, as I told you."

"Hum! Yes, I see."

After dinner I excused myself and have written all this while it is fresh in my memory. Now I must go to work again upon those business papers.

CHAPTER V.

July —, 18—.—

This morning at breakfast I asked Mr. Markham to arrange for my entertainment at some hotel when I came to the city, telling him I would bring my maid, and possibly Mrs. Tate. He seemed not to approve the arrangement, but did not try to dissuade me from my plans.

I spent most of the forenoon resting, as I was very tired, having sat up until four o'clock this morning copying those papers. This afternoon I had such a dear letter from Esther, and as it answers many of my questions, I will copy it into my journal.

L—, July 1st, 18—.

My dear Julia:—I received your letter this morning, and hasten to reply.

Although I was deeply moved by the pathos which, unconsciously to yourself, runs all through your letter, I was delighted with the evidence it gave that I have not been mistaken in my estimate of your ability; and difficult as the position is likely to prove to a conscientious, sensible girl like yourself, still your strength of character and good common sense will enable you to rise equal to every emergency.

Yes, it is delightful to have a good home of one's very own. I was not surprised at your giving free course to your joy on your twenty-first birthday, and your first real holiday; I knew you were a girl

of deep feeling, capable of strong and genuine enthusiasm; having lived such a pent-up life, you never before had anything over which to enthuse and rejoice. I sympathize with you with all my heart.

I am pleased to know that you have a good, capable maid, and that she is so interested in your appearance. You are rather inclined to disregard the advantages of making a good personal appearance, although neat and tidy you will always be, for it is not in your nature to be otherwise. I am not in the least afraid of making you vain by telling you that you have natural attractions, which, with a little attention to what is becoming, will render you a very pleasing girl. Parsons is right,—your hair is beautiful. I used to long to arrange it in a way that would show it to best advantage. Your eyes are unusually good, both as to color and shape, and they are very expressive. Your full, white forehead, contrasted with your red lips, gives you at once an intellectural and sweet, womanly look. When the sweet country air has somewhat rounded out and colored your cheeks, you will be an attractive young lady. I always admired your shapely, firm white hands, and although you were so busily employed at Fledding, the work was not of a sort that spoiled them. I used to imagine how your slender, arched foot would look in a well fitting boot. But I saw that your thoughts were far from these things, and that it would only startle and embarrass you if I mentioned them.

I want you to remember that it is every woman's duty, as well as privilege, to look well. Very few

have been so badly treated by nature, that, with a little attention to harmony of color and appropriate arrangement, they may not make themselves beautiful women. It is not entirely a matter of money, undue labor and time. A little observation, study and care will transform the plainest looking farmer's wife into a woman of attractive appearance. I expect you to give such attention to these matters as will enable you to give pleasure to beauty-loving people.

I highly approve of your having a companion. Of course you must have the right sort of a person. You need some one who will love you, and who has judgment and experience enough to give you wise counsel; you do not need a governess,—nor one who will attempt to curtail your liberty, or interfere with your affairs; but a companion in every sense of the word. She ought to be one whom you can trust as a confidential friend; to whom you can go in perplexity and trouble, and unrestrainedly open your heart, sure of help and sympathy. It may be difficult to find just such a person, but I have written to Mrs. Howard, asking if she knows some one suitable for the position. She has the head and heart to understand just what you need; her large circle of acquaintances will afford her abundant opportunity to make inquiry. She usually writes me a Christmas letter, and I reply with a vacation budget; so, ere many days I hope we shall have this matter settled to the satisfaction of all concerned.

You say you cannot understand my reasons for not accepting your urgent invitation to make my future home with you, and I am not sure I can make

it clear to you, therefore I have not tried to explain myself more fully. The time will come when you will understand and approve of my course.

No doubt, for the present, it would be very pleasant for us to live together, but in the end I think it would not be best for either of us; for you, I am certain, it would be a mistake. Were I with you, you would continue for some time to depend upon me, as you do now, thus retarding your development into a self-reliant, capable woman. As for myself, in a few years at most, you will outgrow your need of me, and although you would never admit it, yet I know I should feel that I had become a mere dependent upon you. Then, having so long been out of regular work, it would be difficult to begin again, if, indeed, I could find an opening.

So, all things considered, I have concluded that it is best for you, in a quiet way, to launch out upon your own responsibility. You will probably make some mistakes, but you will not be slow in comprehending new situations, nor in seeing your way through emergencies. Moreover, you will not be beyond the reach of such assistance as I can render.

I wanted to tell you something of the place I am in, and of the quiet, restful time I am having, but this letter is already long, and I must close. You must write to me soon. As ever,

Yours with love,
ESTHER BERKELY.

Dear Esther, what would I do without her? She has thought everything out for me as usual, and I have more important matters to ask her about, so I will write her at once.

Sunset Park, July 3d, 18—.

My dear Esther:—I have just finished copying your letter into my journal. I thank you very much for all the complimentary and encouraging things in your letter. I especially thank you for undertaking the arrangement about the securing of a companion for me, since this seems necessary. I am glad to follow your advice in this, as in every other matter.

From my journal you will see how I have spent my time. I have now a very important thing to ask you about. You have read my account of last Sunday. I want you to tell me what you think about people who have been baptized and confirmed not being Christians. Esther, are *you* saved? If so, how do you *know* it? This thing troubles me. If I am saved and it is possible for me to know it, I want to know it right away. If I am *not* saved what shall I do? All this makes me rather nervous; I am afraid I may die and after all not be saved.

Mr. Markham told me more of the particulars of Mr. Frank Clayton's death. He was at Marseilles, and while out boating with a party of young men they came in collision with another boat. Frank and two others were drowned. Do you suppose Frank is saved? He died so suddenly! Frank was five years older than myself; he was a large boy when I lived at Mr. Clayton's. I liked him, for he never laughed at me, nor spoke crossly to me. Sometimes when we were alone he would show me pictures and tell me stories about them. I feel very sorry about him, and do hope he is in heaven.

I think I have nothing more to tell you now.

but will write again next week. Please write to me as soon as you can; I want to know all about how you are enjoying your vacation. You are my only friend and I long to hear from you.

Your affectionate

JULIA.

July —, 18—.—

To-day I attended the celebration of our national independence, which took the form of a Sunday-school picnic, in a grove the other side of the village. As the Fourth of July occurs during vacation, little was said about it at Fledding, Mrs. Bradford taking no interest in such matters; so that, even in my own country, I am almost a foreigner, so far as understanding the sentiments and customs of my own countrymen is concerned.

This, in connection with the fact that I am a stranger here, and that the people look curiously at me from a distance, made to-day's experience a novel one.

There were music and speeches, and, of course, the reading of the Declaration of Independence. The children, older people—everybody—seemed to enjoy themselves very much. If I am here next year I shall try to provide more comfortable seats, and otherwise add to the enjoyment of the day. If it had occurred to me, I would have furnished the Sunday-school a nice treat of fruits, ices and lemonade. I must be more thoughtful.

July —, 18—.—

This evening I received the forms of contract from Mr. Markham and Mr. Yates. No

duplicates were sent, so I wrote informing them that I noticed there were duplicates with all the contracts I signed the other day and I would be pleased if they would prepare the same of these. It will take some time to convince these gentlemen that I mean to do business in a business-like way. Evidently they think a "mere school-girl" will give no thought to serious matters, and that, in any case, it can make little difference. I am sure Mr. Clayton never signed contracts in this way.

This forenoon, and part of this afternoon, I spent visiting the homes of the farmers who live on my land. Their wives showed me how they make butter, take care of fruit and do many other things connected with farm work. They were all very friendly, and seemed pleased to see me. I shall have no difficulty in understanding how farms should be managed, which will help me to deal justly with the people and at the same time exact honest dealing on their part. It pleases me, however, that all my people seem kind and trustworthy. I must find out whether anything needs to be done to make their homes reasonably comfortable, and their work more convenient and profitable to them as well as to myself.

This morning a note from Esther tells me she has found a lady, Mrs. Rodgers, who is to be my companion, if on meeting her I so decide. I have a letter from Mrs. Howard which encourages me to believe that Mrs. Rodgers is a very agreeable and congenial lady. I have written to her arranging that we meet in New York.

* * * * * * * * * *

July —, 18—.—

It rained all day Saturday and I stayed at home, read, rested and thought. As the rain continued yesterday we could not go to church, so I had rather a dull day. This morning an interesting letter from Esther has occupied my thought since breakfast. She writes as follows:

L——, July 5th, 18—.

My dear Julia:—Your second letter received. I have already written you about the place where I am spending my vacation and that Mrs. Howard has found a companion for you. Therefore, I will at once proceed with the subject of your inquiry.

I never talk nor write much about religion, for it is such a sacred subject I do not feel worthy to do so. However, if my personal thoughts and feelings will be of any help to you, I would not withhold them.

I have never put the question to myself, "Am I saved?" Ever since I can remember, my mother taught me that God loved me. I cannot remember the time when I did not love God and want to please Him. I have always felt that I was His child and that He would take care of me. I have not been good at all times but, when sinful, I was so miserable that I never rested until I had sought forgiveness. Jesus died for sinners, and so when I have asked for forgiveness in His *Name*, I have never doubted the power of that NAME to procure pardon. It is such a mighty NAME and represents such infinite love and holiness that it makes me tremble—not with fear—but with awe, whenever I speak or write it. I have never been afraid to die,

—am not now,—why should I be? *God* made me, has always loved me. Jesus died to save me. Will They let me be lost when I have given them my life and trusted everything to them?

I am not a theologian, but as I understand it, the Holy Spirit helps us to interpret the meaning of the Scriptures, and teaches us to pray, and witnesses, in our hearts, to God's acceptance of us. From what I have read in the Bible I conclude that since the Holy Spirit has been sent into the world, He is all about us. Have you not heard the illustration of the shipwrecked mariners? After drifting about at sea for several days, suffering intensely from thirst, they sighted a ship, and as soon as they came near enough to be heard, cried, "Bring us water, quick!" The people in the ship shouted back, "The fresh water is all about you! Dip and drink!" Without knowing it they had entered the mouth of a broad river; the fresh water was there —was there in abundance—only they did not know it. So I think it is with the Holy Spirit. He is all about us, and we only have to depend upon Him to make the Holy Word plain; only to rely upon Him to teach us to pray and to lead us into all truth.

As to the Methodists, I have seen something of them. Undoubtedly they are a good people, but their ways would not suit me. Before I began teaching I once visited a friend who lived in C——. She had joined the Methodist church to which her husband belonged. While there I attended their service and was not favorably impressed with the difference between that church and the Episcopal. Neither their method of conducting service nor the

manners of the people were pleasing to me. As you know, our people, on entering the church, kneel—not simply bow the head—but kneel a moment in silent prayer. In this Methodist church, here and there a person bowed the head a moment, while two or three knelt. The others, on entering, immediately sat down, arranged themselves comfortably, and busied themselves reading the slips on which were printed the church notices, or in looking at other papers distributed among the pews; some actually talked in low tones or whispered to each other. One Sunday we were a little late, a dreadful thing to my mind, and so took a seat pretty well back in the row at the side of the pulpit, so that without effort I could see nearly all the congregation. Although I endeavored to fix my thoughts on sacred things, there was so much that was, to me, startling, that I could not help noticing what was going on around me.

After the sermon, which was really very good, and while the doxology was being sung, many of the congregation drew on their overcoats and stood hat in hand, waiting for the benediction; some of the ladies drew on their overshoes, and nearly all adjusted their wraps more or less,—buttoning their gloves,—so that there was a general rustle of preparation. One easily could have supposed that the moment the service closed the congregation was under some necessity of rushing out to catch a train, and that great calamity would result from missing it. But behold! The moment the benediction was pronounced, their haste was all over; yet, instead of the silent hush, the worshipers remaining a

moment with bowed heads, and then, with reverent mien, passing out, as is the custom in our Church these Methodist people began smiling and chatting, shaking hands and visiting with friends, more as we would expect to see at a county fair than in a worshiping congregation, which had just been dismissed. I also noticed that several pressed forward to the altar, and, shaking hands with the minister, engaged in an animated conversation. I afterwards learned from my friend's husband that they were arranging for a meeting of the official board, and discussing the letting of a contract to repair the church.

About fifteen minutes had passed when my friend invited me to accompany her to the class-meeting which was held in one of the class-rooms. This, too, was a new experience for me; I had indeed heard of Methodist class-meetings, but had never before attended one. There were, perhaps, fifty people in the room. Presently some one started a hymn, in which the others joined; the leader came forward and occupied the chair placed for him in front of the little company. After the singing he called on one of those present to offer prayer, after which he made a few remarks upon the sermon and declared the meeting open for any one who wished to "speak, or sing, or pray." After rather an awkward pause, one after another rose and spoke at greater or less length, while occasionally a verse was sung. What most impressed me was a seeming lack of reverence. Two or three seemed to speak because of a great joy that compelled utterance, and I felt a great calm in my soul while I listened

to their words. Some spoke so flippantly, one or two even attempting to say funny things; while others seemed to speak by rote, as if they had said the same thing many times; others repeated a verse or hymn. I would not judge them, but it impressed me that many of them did not realize that they were speaking of the "High and Holy One," before whom Moses was commanded to take off his shoes. Their manner really made me feel faint and ill. I have heard wicked men curse and swear and it did not seem to me so awful as this familiar and stereotyped speaking of my Lord and Savior. There were a few young girls who tremblingly spoke short sentences, and with them I felt more in harmony. In the first place, I could understand how they shrank from thus calling attention to themselves. Only a strong, overpowering sense of duty could enable me thus to speak of matters so personally sacred. Then, too, they seemed to realize something of the solemnity of the occasion when one takes it upon himself or herself to speak of matters relating to Jehovah! There was nothing in their words or manner of the almost seeming impertinence that characterized so many of the other speeches. Occasionally prayer was offered, few taking the trouble to kneel, the majority contenting themselves with merely bowing the head. One old gentleman prayed very humbly, very devoutly, resting his claims on divine mercy upon the invitation given in the Bible. He was followed by a woman, who, in a loud, harsh voice, seemed commanding the Lord to grant to her and those present what she desired; and after denouncing sinners and

unfaithful professors, she called upon God to save them. Others, in praying, reiterated their sentences, and did not seem to realize the need of any spiritual blessing, but simply to feel it incumbent upon them to "take part" by offering prayer. At least I could not discover that any definite petition was offered. Beside me knelt a little girl about twelve years old. I could feel her trembling, and during one of the pauses she began praying. She offered praise and thanks to God because He loved her and gave His son to save her; she asked to be forgiven for her sins and to be made like Jesus. I felt so rested,—just as if I had offered the prayer, and great peace came into my heart. The little girl spoke so low and tremblingly that she was not heard three seats away, and before she finished her short petition a man began offering a loud and rambling prayer. His voice recalled me to my surroundings, but could not dispel the feeling that for a moment, at least, I had stood within the door of the Holy of Holies.

When we came home my friends asked me how I enjoyed the services. I honestly told them how I had felt.

"Oh," said my friend, "that is just because you are prejudiced."

"If that were the case," I replied, "would I not have felt an objection to *all* that was said and done? As I was in sympathy with at least a part of what I heard, surely I am proved not guilty of prejudice."

"Well, of course you cannot expect people who speak in public only when in class or prayer-

meeting, to speak in as concise and connected a manner as those who are accustomed to it."

"It was not the lack of eloquence or correctness that distressed me; it was because so many seemed to have no knowledge of what they were trying to talk about, and their lack of realization of the sacredness of the subject and place."

One thing, of which I did not speak, has troubled me much, namely, that on the Lord's Day, and in the house dedicated to His service, try as I would to hold my thoughts to heavenly things, I, myself, had not sufficient reverence to keep them from wandering to the things of which I have told you. Neither do I approve of criticising the efforts of people who were evidently performing what they considered to be their duty in the best way they knew. No doubt, on High their service was accepted as such. I think it was not wicked to feel keenly the irreverence manifested, nor to notice the difference in the spirit of the testimonies of those who seemed to speak whereof they knew, and of those who simply spoke because it seemed the thing to do. Yet, had I considered how the Lord accepts, not so much what we do as what we try to do, I would not have been so disturbed.

However, as I said at the beginning, the ways of the Methodist people do not suit me. I can worship with more profit to myself spiritually, in the Episcopal Church, where there is not so much to distract my thoughts, nor tempt me to un-Christian criticism.

I have never written nor said so much on this subject before. If it helps you in the least, I shall

feel repaid, although I approached the subject feeling much as the Israelites were taught to feel concerning the touching of the Ark of God by any but the Levites.

This letter is very long. I am always eager to hear from you. Your loving friend,

ESTHER BERKELY.

CHAPTER VI

When going over Julia's journal, and thus reviewing my own past life, I am much impressed with the truth that "No man liveth unto himself." This is beautifully illustrated in Julia's need and Mrs. Rodgers' extremity occurring at the same time. I, also, was a gainer through their thus coming together, for Mrs. Rodgers became my dear and valued friend.

Mrs. Rodgers, whose maiden name was Emily Fowler, was the daughter of a college president.

President Fowler was forty-five years old when he married Emily's mother. When Emily was fifteen years of age, on account of failing health he resigned his position in the college. His wife died soon after. Placing Emily in a first-class boarding school, he removed with his little son, a boy ten years old, to California, where he boarded in the family of his youngest sister.

When twenty years old Emily married Wilber Rodgers, a young minister of rising influence and power. She was well adapted to her position, and in her unostentatious way seconded her husband's efforts to do good.

Mrs. Rodgers was a quiet, retiring woman, whose life had been a sheltered one, but she was endowed with good judgment and warm sympathies. The afflicted and distressed found her ever ready to help with kind words and deeds. Probably her unassuming ministrations were all the more welcome because

they were performed so naturally and unobtrusively. Certain it is that many people who had hitherto repelled all offers of assistance, and who would rather perish than admit their needs, accepted help at the hands of Mrs. Rodgers.

Many people who did not know her well, regarded Mrs. Rodgers as simply a good little woman, who "looked well to the ways of her house;" and as being well educated and accustomed to good society; but they never supposed for a moment that she had a thought beyond her domestic concerns and such claims as society might make upon her. They would have been surprised had they known that her husband always considered her his best adviser, and discussed with her, not only his own affairs, but also the weightier matters and problems which engage the thought of a minister. Neither would they have found it easy to believe she had a minute and exhaustive knowledge of all the benevolent enterprises of the city in which she lived, as well as of the church of which she was a unit. They never knew how many were unconsciously influenced by her to carry out schemes which she originated for the relief of the suffering. Certainly they never dreamed of the multitude of individual cases in which she interested herself. They did know, however, that she was a most winsome little woman, who drew and bound her people to her with strong and sincere love. None feared her; the little children were always appealing to her with their childish wishes and hopes, and so thoroughly did she enter into the feelings and interests of the aged, that they forgot that they were

older than she,—or, perhaps, that she was younger than they.

Her presence in the sick room was a benediction. She always left sufferers quieter, more hopeful and happy. Yet, so gently, so unassumingly, so naturally did she pass in and out that they did not realize why they loved her,—they only knew that they did.

At the time Mrs. Howard wrote to me of Mrs. Rodgers, she was about forty years old, and a widow, her husband having died a few months before. Like so many of his profession, the emergencies of the suffering people all around him were so urgently, so repeatedly, so constantly brought to his notice, that his financial resources were always exhausted. It had been his purpose to provide against the helplessness of old age, or the possibility of his wife's being left a penniless widow. But the strong man was suddenly smitten by a fatal illness and died, leaving his plans unaccomplished.

Some months later, on a sultry day in July, Mrs. Rodgers sat on a low rocking-chair near the window sewing. She was dressed in deep mourning, and her usually calm face looked pale and troubled. A young lady, also dressed in mourning, entered the small but daintily arranged sitting-room, and sat down near Mrs Rodgers.

"Aunt Emily," she began, "I have hurried through my packing so I could have the whole afternoon with you. It does not seem possible that I am to leave you to-morrow, and that we may never again have a home together."

"I am sorry you could not wait until Monday,

but then you will get settled in your new place by Saturday evening and have Sunday to rest in, and to become accustomed to your new surroundings."

"Are your plans any more definite than they were a day or two ago?"

"Yes, dear, so far as to know I must give up this cottage at once. I am sorry to tell you this, but you have a right to know it. I see no way to pay the rent, and under the circumstances, I dare not let a debt accumulate."

"But, Aunt Emily, where will you go? This is very sudden. I did not know you were so reduced financially."

"I have been hoping there would be a favorable opening for me in some place where I could have a comfortable home, and in that case I would not need to tell you, for your young heart is sufficiently burdened without this additional anxiety.

"I am not certain where I am going. Some time ago I wrote to two or three friends asking them to help me in securing some situation that I am capable of filling. If I do not hear from one of them by Monday, I must accept a situation as housekeeper offered me by a widower with a large family.

"As you know, I am fond of children, but I have been so depressed and crushed that I do not feel equal to this truly arduous undertaking."

"Oh, Aunt Emily, I cannot bear to think of your doing this! What would Uncle Wilber say if he knew it?"

"My one glad thought is that he does not know about my troubles. It was his intention to have left you and me at least a competence; but it is

almost impossible for a minister to save anything from his salary. Your uncle always had good appointments and was generously supported by the churches he served, but the demands on him were very great. His people expected him to live in a style that would not form too great a contrast with their own. Our living expenses were increased at least a third by our numerous guests, and by delegates to the conventions and conferences which were frequently held in his church.

"Then, too, the poor and needy always knew the way to our home, and Wilber could never harden his heart towards them. I am very glad this was so, for I could not enjoy comforts procured at the cost of withholding our sympathies from the miseries and necessities of others. You can see how it came about that at the time of his death, he had made none of the provisions he had intended."

"And you expect nothing from the insurance company."

"No. While he was very ill, hovering between life and death, having been unconscious for days, his policy expired, and the company refused to pay the insurance. It would not have been enough to support us, but it would have carried us over these first terrible months."

"Dear Aunt Emily, forgive me if it is wrong to ask, but did not your father leave you some of his money?"

"No, Kate, it is not wrong for you to ask, but the subject is so painful that I never speak of it if I can help it. At the time of my father's marriage he had saved twenty thousand dollars, and owned

a large, comfortable house, which my mother furnished with her own means. Seven years after my mother's death, when I informed my father and brother Sidney of my intended marriage with a minister, they were displeased, but I think my father did not intend to disinherit me. Indeed, he used to write me that when Sidney was twenty-one years old he intended to divide his property equally between us, and then come and live with me. My husband and I wrote him that it made no difference about his giving us the money while he lived, but that we would be glad to have him make his home with us."

"But he never came?'

"No, he was getting old, and when he died ten years after I was married, it was found that all the property had been in Sidney's hands for two or three years."

"And your brother did not offer to divide with you?"

"No, he never offered to settle with us, and your uncle would not ask him for anything. But the poor man did not have much enjoyment from it, for he soon spent it all. Five years later, during his last illness, my husband went to him, took care of him and paid his doctor's bill and funeral expenses. Before dying my brother confessed his wrong and seemed very sorry about it."

"Aunt Emily, there are some things I do not understand. Does not the church provide for the widows of ministers?"

"Another painful subject, my dear. The church is supposed to do so, but for some reason, our people

do not contribute generously nor willingly for this purpose. Furthermore, so much has been said about ministers not laying up money to provide for themselves in old age, or for their families in case of their death, that bread bought with money so grudgingly given by people who talk in that way, would be very bitter food for me. Besides, I have heard your uncle tell so much of the distressing discussions at conference about such claimants; such inquiries about personal affairs, and sometimes such sharp criticisms, even about the deceased minister, or about the use his widow made of the money contributed, that I would rather take my place with the regular army of homeless, penniless widows who are struggling for a subsistence, than to have my husband and myself thus discussed."

"Oh, yes, I remember once, when Uncle Wilber came home, he told us he had given Mrs. Gifford, the widow of a recently deceased minister, three hundred dollars. The conference had objected to doing much for her because she had a wealthy brother, who, they thought, ought to support her. It seemed the brother was unwilling to do so, and Uncle Wilber had been greatly shocked over the discussion of Mrs. Gifford's family embarrassments."

"That was only one case out of many, and for all these reasons I have not applied to the church for help in my emergency."

"Well, I am glad that at least I am able to provide for myself, and so relieve you of that much anxiety."

"Yes, indeed, and although it breaks my heart to

part with you, my darling, for you are like my own child, yet I am glad it is no worse. I loved you as my own when my husband returned from the funeral of your mother, who was his only sister, and brought you with him. As he placed you in my arms, I clasped you to my heart, thanking God for you, and promising to do by you as if you were indeed mine."

"You never saw my mother?"

"No, when we were married she was living in the far west. We were planning to visit her the following summer, when your uncle received a message telling of your father's death, and asking him to come to her at once. He found her in a dying condition, and with her last breath she committed you to his care. And what a blessing you have been to us! But it is tea time."

When they were seated at the table, Mrs. Rodgers said:

"I have been talking to you in a very doleful way, but you are a woman now and ought to know about these things."

"Oh, yes, I want you to tell me all."

"I do hope your new home will be pleasant. I do not dread hard work for you, but would like you to have congenial surroundings. You are a blossom that expands and gives out its fragrance in the sunshine of kindness; but you will soon droop if indifference overshadows you."

"Well, I like the work I am to do. Secretary and companion to an elderly lady,'—that sounds well! She explains that I am to attend to her correspondence, read to her, and entertain her. I like old ladies and think I shall have a pleasant time."

"I hope so, but my troubles have made me apprehensive. You must write me soon and tell me exactly how things are. Some way I cannot shake off the impression that Mrs. Payson is an irritable, exacting and inconsiderate person, who will make great demands upon your time and patience."

"Oh, my impressions are just the reverse; she will make much of me and I shall have a delightful time."

"I am sure I hope so."

As they rose from the table the postman brought a letter addressed to Mrs. Rodgers. After glancing at it she exclaimed:

"Oh, this is from Mrs. Howard, one of my friends to whom I wrote concerning a situation."

"I am so glad," cried Kate, "that it has come to-day. Let us go into the sitting-room immediately! I cannot wait to know what it says."

"You shall not wait. I will read it to you at once."

Seaside ——, July —, 18—.

My dear Emily:—I am sure you know that it is not because of indifference that I have so long delayed answering the letter of inquiry with which you honored me. I have been waiting to hear from different people to whom I have written concerning the matter. Most of my friends, like myself, have fled from the heat of the city, and are scattered up and down the coast or among the mountains. For that reason I had to send my letters to their city homes to be forwarded.

This morning I received a letter from Miss Berkely, a former pupil of mine, asking if I knew of a lady whom I could recommend, who would engage herself as companion and chaperon to Miss Julia Seymour, a bright, promising girl, twenty-one years old, who has recently inherited a large fortune. She is quite alone in the world and has suddenly found herself in a very responsible place. Miss Berkely writes as follows:

"She needs an older person with her as friend, adviser and protector. In order to command Julia's respect, she must be well educated, cultured and accomplished, and possessed of good natural mental ability; in order to be able to advise her, she must be a person of experience and judgment. I can think of no one so likely as yourself to know of some one who will meet these difficult and exacting conditions.

"I am at liberty to authorize you to engage such a person as described on such terms as you think right."

You may be sure I lost no time in telegraphing Miss Berkely, "I have found one who meets your requirements."

In addition to what Miss Berkely has written, I will say that when I visited her last winter I met Miss Seymour, and think you will find her a congenial friend. I feel sure you will have a pleasant home with her, as well as an opportunity to do good to one who needs your love and care.

Please write me, fully and freely, what you think of this proposition, and if you decide to accept it, let me know your wishes concerning terms and arrange-

ments. Please let me know if I can be helpful to you in any other way. I remain

Your affectionate friend,
CORDELIA HOWARD.

"Oh, Aunt Emily, how delightful! Who is Mrs. Howard? I see she has found in you the right woman for the right place. My intense anxiety about that being relieved, I want to know something about this friend of yours who is authorized to engage you on her own terms. I see she leaves that for you to settle, so I am favorably impressed. What sort of a person is she?"

"We were school friends—were in the same classes and occupied the same room in C —— seminary."

"Where was her home when she was at school? Did you know her family?"

"Mr. Loyd, Cordelia's father, was a literary man, and during his life secured a sufficient income to enable them to live in a comfortable and genteel way. Cordelia, a girl of great general ability, received a thorough education. Soon after she left the seminary her father died, and her mother, who, for some time had been in poor health, did not long survive him.

"Cordelia was now twenty-three years old. Not willing to become dependent on her mother's wealthy relatives, who cordially offered her a home and support, and unwilling to encroach upon the small means left her, the interest of which was insufficient to support her, Cordelia obtained the position of governess in the home of Miss Berkely's

father. She remained with this family five years, when she married Mr. Walter Howard, a rich banker in Boston.

"Her relation to prominent families in New York, her beauty, strength of character, and her husband's wealth and social standing have given Mrs. Howard a position of influence in the highest circles of New York and Boston society."

"This is all very interesting. Sad as it will be to leave you, the thought that you are settled in so desirable a home, after I have left you, will brighten my journey. You will write and tell me all about Miss Seymour, and the place and everything?"

"Yes, my dear, it will be a great pleasure to feel there is one in this wide world who wants to know all about me. Writing to you and telling you all, will be a joyful privilege. Of course I shall expect to know all the little and great things that enter into your life."

"Oh, I'll send you more letters than it will be easy to answer."

"It is getting late, and you must have a good night's rest to prepare you for your journey, so good night."

Kate bent over and kissed her affectionately, saying:

"Good night, dear Aunt Emily. Peaceful dreams!"

The next morning Kate started for her new home. A few days later Mrs. Rodgers joined Julia in New York.

CHAPTER VII.

July —, 18—.—

Esther's letter set me to thinking that perhaps the people in the class-meeting here may say something that will help me. I am not like Esther. I have not the least feeling that I am saved. Her letter shows clearly enough that she is certainly a Christian. Of course I see that if I could believe and trust as she does, I, too, would be in a saved state. I do not know what, but something has prevented my exercising this faith. Esther has trusted in this way ever since she can remember. So, while her letter helps me a great deal, it does not make clear to me just how I must begin.

With these things in mind, while on the way to church, I asked Mrs. Tate if there was a class-meeting in connection with the morning services.

"Yes," she replied, "it meets immediately after the morning service."

"Would you like to attend the class-meeting?"

"Very much."

"I think I would, too."

The minister preached from the text, "So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the Garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—(Gen. III., 24.) I enjoyed the sermon, for it helped me to understand the difference between Esther and me, and the cause of

it. We were both born with inherited sin; until we were old enough to know good from evil, having never committed willful sin, having never rejected Christ, through the merits of the atonement we were then heirs of heaven. Thus infants are in the position of Christians; therefore, many churches believe them entitled to baptism. Thus far Esther's case and mine are the same. When we reached the age of accountability, Esther yielded her will to God, accepted Christ as her Savior, and has trusted Him ever since. She has never willfully rejected Christ, therefore she cannot remember a time when she did not feel that she was a child of God.

In some way it has come about, that while I have never knowingly rejected Christ, yet sometime I must have done so, for I know that pleasing God has not been the uppermost thought and desire of my heart. Of course, my mother taught me to pray, but I do not remember that she ever talked much to me about trying to please God. Perhaps she was like Esther and felt the subject was too sacred for her to speak of. Here, in my mind, arises the query: would it not have been better for Esther and my mother to have followed the example of the Methodists, and to have talked more freely of their Christian experiences, as did Esther's mother? My mother taught me that it was wrong and dishonorable to tell an untruth. She said we should perform our duties with perfect faithfulness, whether others know and appreciate it or not; that we disgraced and injured ourselves if we failed to do this. She used to read prayers, and although

they contained petitions for God's help in the performance of our duties and in our daily life, I understood them only in a general way, and did not comprehend that we might always have especial personal help.

My Sunday-school teachers have always taught me that Jesus died to save us; but for some reason there has been no personal application that made any impression upon my mind.

It is true I have always had an unsatisfied feeling about myself; but God has seemed so far off, and my ideas have been so vague, that I was helpless to better myself.

Now, according to the sermon to-day, what I need is to be converted. The something that prevents my trusting as Esther does, is lack of repentance and consecration. But here again I was in perplexity. Of what was I to repent? I am truly sorry that my heart is not good, that I have not lived to please God, that I have not more perfectly performed my duties; yet I do not know of much that I have *done* that is good or bad. As to consecration, I am sure that I want to devote my life to God's service. But, since leaving Fledding, I am becoming aware that I have something of a will of my own; when I think of devoting my life to the service of God, something in my mind or heart rises in opposition. I struggle to say with my whole heart, "I will obey God at all hazards"; but, after I have said it, I am not sure that I have determined to do so. So I went into the class-meeting with a great longing for help.

The class-meeting began very much as the one

Esther described. For some reason the speaking did not affect me as it did her. Perhaps my unsatisfied heart was so eager for help that I did not notice so much how things were said as what they meant.

The first to speak was an old man who said that his probation was nearly over, and that he expected soon to receive the promised reward. He seemed very glad about it, but I did not know what he expected to be rewarded for.

Then a middle-aged man spoke quite vehemently of his intention to continue in the Christian course, and assured the older man that he was following on, and that after a few more years he would join him in the home beyond. After this a verse was sung with great spirit. I felt the enthusiasm of the speaker, but it did not show me any way out of my trouble.

A dejected looking man rose and said that for many years he had been trying to make his way to Heaven, and asked the brothers and sisters to pray for him. I thought, "That man is just like me; he is trying, but has not found what he wants."

Another spoke of temptations, trials, failures and discouragements. It did not seem that he had been successful in his efforts to be a Christian. He was told to trust God and all would be well. I already understood that, so I had learned nothing yet. What I wanted to know was how to make a beginning.

The next was a man who confessed he had not been as faithful as he ought; had neglected secret prayer, and the study of God's Word; consequently

his hope had been dimmed and his joy lessened. He said he was very sorry, and promised God and the brethren that he would do better. "There," said I to myself, "that helps me a little; I can read the Bible more and pray more."

Several spoke in so low a voice I could not hear them. A number simply said they loved God and trusted Him to save them. At the last a plainly dressed woman who sat in a seat with a number of little children, rose, and, speaking in clear but reverent tone, told of the joy she found in Christian service; she said she had no opportunity to do great things, but had consecrated her life to God's service, and trusted Him for grace to do just such things as He gave her; that she washed dishes and tied on little shoes to the glory of God, for she had learned that whether we eat or drink, or whatsoever we do, to do it all to the glory of God. In thus trusting and serving her joy had become wonderful; she dwelt in the presence of her Savior continually, and her peace was like a river, ever broadening and deepening.

I wanted to come right home and write these thoughts in my journal, while they were fresh in my mind. From one I had gained the idea that repentance is the sorrow for sin which leads us to cease doing wrong and become willing to do right; from that good woman I learned that consecration means just belonging to God, and being ready to do everything, however insignificant or great, in such a way that God will be honored in our act.

What though some of the speeches this morning were meaningless! What though some of the

people seemed to have little heart in what they said! Were not these two testimonies worth all the world to me? I am beginning to find a place on which to stand; I can be ready for such service as God gives me to perform; I can study my Bible, pray, and trust Him to lead me into the right way, and so I can go on until my life and experience are like that woman's.

July —, 18—.—

My days are becoming very full. If this continues, and it probably will, I shall have as busy a life as I ever had at Fledding. I have arranged for myself a sort of programme according to which my early morning hours are spent in Bible study, reading the prayer-book and praying for help to lead a life pleasing to God. After breakfast I practice my music and look over the new magazines and papers, of which I now have a large supply. In the afternoon I drive out, usually visiting one or two farmers. On my return I write letters and study.

Thinking I would better read the New Testament through again, I studied this morning the first chapter of St. Matthew's gospel. I was much impressed by a part of the twenty-first verse, "And thou shalt call his name JESUS, for he shall save his people from their sins." I have read this chapter many times, but never particularly noticed this verse. I have always thought of Jesus dying to save us from punishment for our sins, but this verse says, "He shall save his people from their SINS." That will meet my needs, for while I have a desire to be forgiven for my sins, I have always been troubled over the tend-

ency of humanity to continue in their sins. Since the question has been raised about our being saved in this life, and knowing that we are saved, and that there is nothing in death to change our sinful natures, it naturally follows that, although our past sins are forgiven, if we enter Heaven with an unchanged nature, we must retain this nature there and continue in sin. But if JESUS is to save us from our sins,—I do not altogether understand this verse, but it seems to mean more than I had supposed,—if Jesus can save us from our sins so we can enter Heaven as sinless creatures, can He not thus save us while yet on earth? I knelt in my room and prayed that I might understand more fully what I read in the Holy Bible.

July —, 18—.—

To-day the Rev. Mr. Brooks, the Methodist minister, came to see Mrs. Tate, and also called on me. He talked very pleasantly about the country, and seemed glad to learn that I was going to spend some time in the place. He then said:

"You are a member of the Episcopal Church?"

"Yes," I replied, "my mother and grandparents belonged to that Church, as well as Mrs. Bradford of Fledding Seminary. I never attended any other service until I came here."

"Indeed! Well, we are glad to have you come, and wish you could influence more of the people living on your land to attend church."

"I had not thought about it, but I will try to do so."

"Have you ever attended a camp-meeting?"

"No, Mr. Brooks."

"Our district camp-meeting begins the twelfth of

August. It is held at W——, about fifteen miles from here. Would you not like to arrange to go?"

"I do not know. Please tell me about this camp-meeting. What do you do when there? What arrangements do you make to go?"

"We hold religious services; there are three or four sermons a day, besides several prayer-meetings. Christian people meet and talk of their Christian experiences, and try to urge non-Christians to change their course and become servants of the Lord.

"As to the arrangements, we rent a cottage or tent, and bring with us such things as are necessary to make us comfortable during our two weeks' stay in the camp."

"Really, I am quite interested. Could I rent a cottage or tent? I would need rather a large one, for Mrs. Tate would be glad to go, and I should take my maid. Mrs. Rodgers will be here soon and I should want her to go. Besides, we would need some one to cook and take care of the tent. Then there would be the horses and carriage,—some one must go to take care of them."

"I was going to invite you to be our guest and occupy a room in our cottage, but your plan of taking a number of people is much better. Why not build a cottage, and then it will always be there for yourself and your people who may attend from year to year?"

"I believe I should like that better."

"If you so wish, I will send a carpenter out to see you about it. Mr. Brown is a member of our church and will know just what will be needed."

"Oh, thank you! That will be quite delightful, —building a new house and living in this way for a week or two."

"I think you will enjoy it. You will meet a great many of our best Christian young people."

"Indeed, I think I must go."

"As you are attending our services for the present, perhaps you would like to take some of our church papers?"

"Yes, I think I would. I never have had time to read much, and am trying to make up for what I have lost in the past."

So I subscribed for a number of missionary and other church papers. After this I told Rev. Mr. Brooks about the papers and magazines I am reading, and asked him if there were any that would tell me about farming, mills, and factories. He gave me the names of several publications for which I shall send.

When he went away he said Mrs. Brooks would call in a few days. I have been told that this lady is a college graduate and a very superior woman, but believing that here she can accomplish the most good, she is content to live in this little village, among people greatly inferior to her intellectually, and is happy in her work. I like Rev. Mr. Brooks very much. After we are better acquainted I shall talk to him about this matter of being saved, and many other questions connected with it.

July —, 18—.—

This morning Mr. Day, the grain merchant at the village, called. He introduced himself, saying he was one of the church stewards,

whose duty it is to visit the members of the church and congregation to receive their contributions towards the support of the church. As there is no church of any other denomination here, they give the opportunity to all who live in the vicinity to contribute if they so desire. I asked:

"How much do you wish me to give?"

"That is for you to decide. This year, repairs on church and parsonage, general running expenses, pastor's salary and benevolent collections make it necessary to raise about fifteen hundred dollars, or three hundred and seventy-five dollars per quarter. We are back one hundred dollars on last quarter, so we now need nearly five hundred dollars."

"If I pay the one hundred dollars that is back, can the people raise the remaining four hundred dollars?"

"Why, I hope so,—but as you are a member of another church we did not expect so much."

"I attend church here and have the benefit of the services, so I ought to bear my share of the expenses. It occurs to me that the deficit is a bad thing, and if I could relieve you of that it would not be so difficult to raise the remainder."

"Thank you very much indeed."

"If it is not an improper question, may I ask the amount of the pastor's salary?"

"That is a question of public interest and you are entitled to know. His salary is one thousand dollars a year."

"If during the year you need more money than you can raise, please let me know. I shall always be glad to help."

"Thank you. You have been in class-meeting several times, but I have not seen you at our Sunday-school. We would be pleased to have you come. Will you not teach a class?"

"Oh, indeed, I am not capable of doing that. I am but a learner myself."

"Well, then come and join one of the Bible-classes. Professor Benton, principal of the school, is an excellent Bible-class teacher."

"Thank you, perhaps I shall."

This is all that has occurred to-day that is unusual. After luncheon we start for New York.

July —, 18—.—

Last evening, Mrs. Tate, Parsons and I reached Yew York. We had a very pleasant journey in a magnificent parlor car, which was quite a contrast to the coaches in which I came from Fledding to Sunset Park.

At the station a beautiful carriage was in readiness, and every arrangement for our comfort had been carefully made. At the hotel Mrs. Rodgers was awaiting me. She is such a lovely lady. Some way, I had not been able to get it out of my mind that she would be like Mrs. Bradford. I am most agreeably disappointed, but will write more about her later.

I have spent to-day in going over my spacious and elegantly-furnished city residence. It is so large and the details are so many, that as yet I have but a confused impression of velvet carpets, handsome chairs and sofas, draperies and lace, and stained glass, through which the varied colored lights fall with fine effect upon floor, statuary,

cabinets, and marble and inlaid tables. When I close my eyes visions of a wilderness of pictures and other works of art pass before me. I could arrive at no conclusion nor form any plans to-day. Mrs. Rodgers seemed quite at home among these wonderful things, and was able to explain what to me, in my ignorance, was new and strange.

The beauty of the building and its contents thrill me with a new sort of pleasure that I cannot describe. Some way, too, it overwhelms and oppresses me to think of establishing myself here at present; Sunset Park will be a restful place after this labyrinth of splendor. I would like to see those grand saloons, drawing-rooms and halls lighted up with those wonderful chandeliers! Certainly it would look like fairyland. Through all this confusion of thought there steals across my mind, like a sad refrain, the memory that this beautiful home has been a delight to others now silent in death,—its massive doors are forever closed to them,—they can come home no more; and I, the stranger, lonely, and forsaken by kindred, have passed in and taken possession. Oh, truly, truly I must be careful how I use all that has been so unexpectedly placed in my hands.

Our apartments at the hotel are also very grand. Arrangements have been made for us to take our meals in our private parlor, which we did last evening and this morning. This evening I asked Mrs. Rodgers to go with me to the public dining-room. Having seen so little of the world and its people, I want an opportunity to learn all I can about them.

It was eight o'clock when we entered the dining-room. Near the small table at which we sat was a larger one where quite a company of people in evening dress were dining. The flash of diamonds and other jewels displayed to advantage the loveliness of these beautifully dressed women. Their manners were easy and polished, and they all seemed gay and happy.

I suppose this is the sort of society Mr. Markham thought I would be eager to enter. Since seeing this party I am uncertain about my feelings in the matter. At present, in company with such people, I am sure I should feel very strange and ill at ease. Diffidence would prevent my laughing and talking as they do, and a silent, timid person would be out of place in such a party. On the other hand, I would like to know what they are talking about that pleases them so much. I wonder how it would seem to have on one of those beautiful dresses, and how I would look wearing such gems. I would like to go to a ball myself and see what it is like,—and to know these people and of what they are thinking.

I believe the ball these people are going to attend is given in honor of some distinguished foreigner, who has just landed in New York. Although it is such an unusual season, many have come from different summer resorts to attend it.

July —, 18—.—

I have again gone over that marvel of a house, and have a somewhat clearer idea of the general arrangement of the establishment. The house itself is a triumph of art. I had

a look at the library of which Mr. Markham has spoken. To his surprise and almost consternation, the first and only order I have given was to have the law books packed and sent to Sunset Park. He seemed to think it almost sacrilege to remove them from this place; but I need them, so they are to be sent.

There is very little of interest going on in the city; but New York itself would hold my attention for a long time. I have done some shopping and these huge business houses amaze me not a little. I have selected new furniture for the library at Sunset, carpet and upholstering of a cool, restful, dark green.

CHAPTER VIII.

July —, 18—.—

This morning we attended Church services and enjoyed them very much. There was not a large congregation, but the clergyman was earnest and his sermon good. He spoke of character building, saying that it means more than what we do or say, for all we see, think, hear, read,—and even the influences we receive from association with others, enter into and become a part of its structure.

To me this is a very serious matter, for, as the clergyman reasoned it out, our characters are our very selves, that which we shall take with us from this world and have hereafter. How very important then that I make sure of obtaining divine help and direction! I would like to build up a noble, well rounded, complete character, but I do not know what elements to grasp, or what work to undertake to aid me in this development. I would like to spend my life accomplishing good, but there is no opportunity. I would like to show love and kindness, but there is no one to receive from me. I would be so glad to bring Esther into my home, and throughout her life-time relieve her of the necessity of care and toil; to bring her lovely mother with her, and send her noble brothers to college, and then furnish the means to establish each in his chosen profession. It would be such a pleasure to send her

sisters to school, and after their education is finished, settle the whole family in such a home as would suit them, providing them with all the comforts and happiness in my power to give.

The preacher also spoke of transacting business in a way that will allow the free exercise of the highest motives. I do not yet understand what opportunities for noble acts business transactions may afford; but I can be careful what I say and think, and thus make a beginning in character building, as a stepping stone towards good deeds. I can work hard to understand my business concerns and watch for opportunities. I can study, and pray for a good heart, so that if ever the possibility to do good does come, I may be prepared; I can guard against selfishness, and unholy ambition, which the clergyman says is but another form of selfishness. Like the saintly woman who says such helpful things in class-meeting, I can endeavor "whether I eat or drink, or whatsoever I do, to do it all to the glory of God." Perhaps, if I am careful in little things, God will help me to do greater things.

When Mrs. Tate lived in Scotland she belonged to the Presbyterian Church. This evening she said she would like to attend a Presbyterian service, so we all went with her.

The minister preached from the text, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." —(St. Luke xii. 34.) He proved from Scripture that the obligation to give one tenth of our increase is not a part of the old ceremonial law—as some suppose—but of the moral law. After making clear

that this is one of God's requirements, he proceeded to show the necessity for such a law, and explained that the church is of divine origin, and that its demands cannot be set aside without incurring divine displeasure. Among its claims are the erection of church edifices, the support of the ministry, the missionary interests, both home and foreign, and the maintenance of educational institutions.

He also mentioned the thousands of poor people whose sufferings give them a claim upon our sympathies; the sick people, of whom we should be mindful; the homeless orphans, for whom we ought to provide; and the friendless, whose comfort we should consider.

I am very glad to have heard this sermon, for it opens up an avenue of service that I shall enter with delight. Although I cannot personally perform great acts, I can at least consecrate my wealth to the service of Christ. The tenth of my income will be a large sum, but from what I have heard to-day there are enough worthy causes upon which it can be expended.

I notice that while the different churches all have one purpose, viz., to lead people to serve Christ, each seems to emphasize some particular duty. One exalts that of showing due reverence to Almighty God; another lays especial stress upon personal religious experience; and a third dwells much upon the duty of Christian giving. I suppose that each has also its shortcomings, as Esther, in one case, has pointed out. As yet, I am undecided which is best adapted to my needs.

July —, 18—.—

Sunday evening the minister announced that on Monday evening, in the lecture room of the church, there would be a special meeting of the Woman's Missionary Society. Being desirous of learning about all these interests, I asked Mrs. Rodgers if she thought it would be improper for us to go. She thought not, if we showed our interest by contributing to the treasury. Mrs. Tate was delighted to go with us. We reached the church a few minutes before the meeting opened, and at once a lady came forward to greet us. Mrs. Rodgers explained in her easy, beautiful way, that we were strangers in the city, and, having heard the announcement on Sunday, we were interested and came. Her cordial reception made us feel very welcome.

After the meeting was called to order, the president stated that the society had undertaken to build a hospital for women and children in one of their foreign fields. She explained the great need of such an institution, and dwelt upon the blessedness of the privilege of contributing toward such an object. How much trouble and suffering there are in the world, of which I know nothing. The president said that five thousand dollars was needed by fall, and of this amount the churches in New York City were expected to raise two thousand dollars; since this was one of the small churches, they were asked to raise but one hundred dollars. As many members of the larger churches were absent from the city, they could take no action until their return. Few of their own members being away,

there was no reason why they should not begin at once. After a lengthy discussion, they decided upon the various things which they could do to raise the one hundred dollars, and the meeting closed.

I then approached the president, telling her I would contribute something, drew my check book from my pocket, and made out a check for one thousand dollars. She looked much surprised, asked where I was staying, and then thanked me. This afternoon a committee appointed by their society was sent to thank me for my gift of yesterday. I told them I was glad to see them, but that it was unnecessary for them to have taken so much trouble, for it was as great a pleasure for me to give the money as it was to them to receive it. They said their president was much disturbed because she had made so little response yesterday. It was such an unusual thing for any one, much less a stranger, to come in and quietly give them a thousand dollars that it seemed too good to be true. The president, not knowing me, did not feel sure the check would be honored at the bank, hence her reserve.

They then told me they felt more than ever obligated to raise their one hundred dollars as a thank offering for the one thousand dollars.

After they went away I fell to thinking over what had occurred. I am surprised that it is such an unusual thing for rich people to contribute largely for so worthy a cause. Why is it? One would think it almost discreditable to the wealthier classes, that these earnest Christian women could hardly believe that one who had just learned of such needs

should wish to give this sum towards helping to alleviate them.

Mrs. Rodgers, who did not know the amount I had given until the ladies called, remarked this evening that it would be well for me to study carefully the different causes worthy of consideration, and thus be able to apportion my contributions according to the importance of the claims. I told her that as yet I had had no time to inform myself on these lines, and that the Sunday sermon on Christian giving had impressed me so deeply, I felt that this first opportunity to act upon my new convictions must be met with something unusual. She replied that if this was the case, there was no room for criticism of my unusual act.

From what Mrs. Rodgers and the ladies said, I judge that when people give large sums of money they usually do it in a very public manner,—at some large and important convention. I wonder why? Surely I deserve no more praise for giving one thousand dollars to a good cause than many a poor woman, who, at a really greater sacrifice than mine, gives one dollar. Yet no one thinks much of that! Things seem to grow more mysterious and perplexing.

July —, 18—.—

Yesterday we returned home to dear old Sunset Park. "Home" is a beautiful word; having been without a home such a great part of my life, it seems as if I cannot say it often enough. I have read that the author of the touching song, "Home, Sweet Home," was himself a homeless wanderer. I think only such an one could have

written the song; only such an one could ever know the deepest longings for home.

While in New York I saw much, heard much, and thought much. Life looks like very serious business; as fast as one problem is solved, new ones present themselves. By the way, Mrs. Rodgers says that many people make large gifts in public places, hoping thereby to incite others to do likewise. Strange that this should be necessary. When people give money because some one else does, is it real generosity? But Mrs. Rodgers says that while some may not give from the highest motives, others give at such times, who have never before seen it in the light of privilege.

July —, 18—.—

Mrs. Rodgers is going to be a great help to me; she is a true, earnest Christian, with whom I can talk very freely. She has told me much about herself and her niece Kate, of whom she likes to talk. * * * * * *

Mrs. Rodgers is a rather small, but well formed woman, about forty years old, with blue eyes and dark brown hair. The soft curves of her delicate, mobile features make one instantly feel that she could never say nor do a harsh thing. When she speaks, her soft, well modulated tones at once assure you that you are in the presence of a cultured, refined woman. She is so unobtrusive that I never feel her presence in the least unpleasant; she is so thoroughly well bred, with quick, almost intuitive sympathies, together with so much tact, that I do not experience the least degree of uncomfortable restraint in her presence as companion

and chaperon; on the contrary, I find great relief and comfort in having such a friend to talk with about all the things in which I am interested; and her opinions impress me as being very correct. She says there is no way of understanding many of the things I inquire about without thinking them out for myself. Other things she takes great pains to explain.

July —, 18—.—

I have just written a long letter to Esther, which I will now copy into my journal.

Sunset Park, July —, 18—.

My dear Esther:—Yesterday I received your kind letter giving me permission to show Mrs. Rodgers yours about Christian experience. In my previous letter I have already told you how helpful it has been to me, and now I come to you with more of my perplexities. Many of these you will discover from my journal, but there are still others that trouble me.

First, however, I want to say that you need not apprehend any misunderstanding of the spirit of your letter on the part of Mrs. Rodgers. She says that true Methodists will not shrink from just and conscientious criticisms of their faults. Mrs. Rodgers thinks that since others, as well as yourself, see these things, nothing is gained by attempting to excuse or cover them; a better way would be to acknowledge them and set about seeking a remedy, thus avoiding the contempt that would otherwise be deserved.

In many of your criticisms Mrs. Rodgers quite

agrees with you. For one thing, she thinks that many Methodists so emphasize the importance and value of Christian testimony, that they come to look upon the act of testifying as the evidence of their Christianity, very much as I considered myself a Christian because I had been baptized. Consequently, in the Methodist, as well as in the Episcopal Church, there are many who do not understand that to be a true Christian one must not only confess Christ, but obey His commands, and follow His example. This is, perhaps, the reason why the Church of God is disgraced by so many inconsistent Christians. Therefore, when these people undertake to talk of Christian experience, like all others who attempt to talk on a subject of which they are ignorant, their remarks are lacking in spirit, and become mere empty sound. Moreover, since the church members who are consistent in their personal lives, so generally quietly acquiesce in the wrong-doing of nominal Christians, they, in a measure, make themselves responsible for the presence of such in the church. Hence, the testimony of the former is meaningless, disconnected and unprofitable; while the knowledge that the sin of such people is allowed to pass unrebuked tends to make less confident the testimony of those who endeavor to be true.

Mrs. Rodgers further says that no eloquence nor rhetoric can put life into the testimony of an inconsistent Christian. On the other hand there are cultured, educated people,—and still others illiterate and uneducated,—who, because of the genuineness of their Christianity, give testimonies that are

simple, definite and helpful to all who hear them. She is very positive that this is the secret of the power of testimony; and that the lack of it explains why so many such meetings are called "dry."

Mrs. Rodgers also deeply deplores the lack of reverence in many churches, besides the Methodist. On the other hand, she believes that a lack of seemly Christian cordiality has a chilling effect upon church attendance. While she wholly disapproves of everything like visiting, or talking of business matters before or following a service of worship, yet she thinks a friendly greeting, especially when extended to strangers, with an earnest invitation to "come again," does much good.

In returning to your letter again, I must say I never can thank you for it sufficiently . I think that to speak rarely of religion because it is such a sacred subject that you feel unworthy to do so, must be a mistake. How can it be otherwise when what you have written has helped me so much? Only think how much good you could have done me in all the past years, if you had talked with me of these things as you did of other matters pertaining to my interest! It seems to me like this: I love to talk about you because you have been so good to me. In the same way, since Christ has done so much for us, it ought to be the most natural thing in the world to talk about His love and goodness with those who know Him, or want to know Him.

I could not speak of you in the presence of any one who did not respect you, and in some measure appreciate your worth, unless, indeed, it might be that I could do them a kindness by helping them to

understand how noble and true a woman can be. So I can understand how one of your nature would shrink from speaking of religious subjects to those who do not reverence God, unless it might be with the hope of leading them to share in the joy of realizing His love; but with those who already do this, I should think such intercourse would give the greatest satisfaction.

My thought goes out still further. I am afraid that many of the girls at Fledding, like myself, have never realized that they may have real communion with our Savior,—that they may know they are children of "Our Heavenly Father." A sermon such as I heard may never come in their way to set them thinking and inquiring. But they have you, and you understand all about it. If you do not tell them these things, I fear they may never hear them; and it seems to me this would be a terrible calamity. Esther, dear, dear Esther, won't you, for the love of Christ, and for the sake of their precious souls, tell the girls of your own experience, and the joy it gives you? Since hearing and thinking so much, my thoughts constantly go out to them; I am so sorry they have not the opportunities I am having, but am so glad you are there, for you can, at least, give them a chance to know of their privileges.

After all this, and what you will read in my journal, you will not be surprised when I tell you that I am inclined to think the Methodist Church is the one that can help me the most. Notwithstanding the seeming incongruities of those who talk in the class-meeting, there are always sure to be some

present, who are earnest, true Christians, and their testimony has already been so helpful to me that I do not want to lose the benefit I am certain it will be to me in the future. Moreover, the doctrine and teaching of this church seem to be Scriptural, and as such, meet my needs. You know that of late I have studied my Bible a great deal; it has become a new and intensely interesting book. Some days I read it for hours, and find many injunctions to Christians to bear witness by word and deed to the salvation we have through Christ. About one matter I am yet uncertain; this church has very strict rules concerning the conduct of its members, especially concerning amusements. To be sure, I have been told that many of the members, especially the younger people, are not very particular about keeping the rules. However, if I join a church and promise to obey its laws, I would consider it dishonorable and wicked to break such a solemn pledge. I have not danced since I took lessons at Fledding before you came, but never even have thought of its being wrong, and cannot see any harm in it now. In any case, I must wait until I am sure I am converted before I join this church; and in the meantime I must find out for myself whether it would be right for me to make all the promises required to become a member.

With your order-loving, esthetic nature and way of looking at things, I cannot imagine you as anything but what you are; you almost seem a part of the grand but simple service of our Church, with its dim lights, sweet chants and glorious music; its reverential awe and silent worship. I am different,

and do not absorb the spirit of the occasion, but need to be told what everything means and have it all minutely explained. With all their shortcomings, the Methodists do this, and it strikes a responsive chord in my soul.

Will you forgive me for writing such a long letter, and wherever you see I need setting straight, please correct me?

As ever, yours with love,

JULIA SEYMOUR.

CHAPTER IX.

Aug. —, 18—.—

About one o'clock to-day, quite unexpectedly, Mr. Yates arrived at Sunset Park. After luncheon he said there were some matters about which he wished to consult me. We went to the library and he explained:

"Miss Seymour, I suppose you know that the late Mr. Clayton left a will by which he bequeathed all his property to his son, Frank Clayton. Frank Clayton's mother, who died some years ago, was the daughter of Mr. Cyrus Cooper of Baltimore. His son, Mr. Henry Cooper, brother of the late Mrs. Clayton, called at my office last week and claimed that as Mr. Clayton's will left all his property to Frank, he, Mr. Henry Cooper, as his nearest relative, is Mr. Frank's rightful heir. I suppose there is no doubt that both Mr. Frank and his father, had they known what was going to happen, would have wished the property to go to the Cooper family. They were very much attached to Mrs. Cooper's kindred."

"Excuse me for interrupting you for a moment, please. Are the Cooper people poor?"

"No, they have plenty of money to carry this case through the courts should they choose to do so. Moreover, Mr. Cooper is himself a lawyer, with many friends in the legal profession; more than that, he is acquainted with most of the judges

before whom the case would be likely to come, several of them being his most intimate friends. He would have a great deal in his favor were the matter brought into court."

This was not what I had in mind; I asked the question with the intention of providing for Mrs. Clayton's brother if he were in needy circumstances.

"But what can be done to prevent this suit?"

"That is what I came to talk about. Even if Mr. Cooper won his case, it would cost him quite a sum of money before it was all settled. From several remarks you made when I was here before, I concluded that if you owned only Sunset Park and were thus free from the complications, perplexities and responsibilities of managing the remainder of your possessions, you would be happier and enjoy life more than in fulfilling the duties that are a part of a rich person's life.

"Therefore it occurred to me that perhaps you could effect a settlement with the Cooper family, whereby you could satisfy them and relieve yourself of those troublesome mills, factories, tenement houses, mercantile enterprises, and other business cares, without litigation, provided you were permitted to retain Sunset Park."

"Mr. Yates, do you know whether Mrs. Clayton's father gave her any money, and if so, how much? Also, whether she held it in her own name—or was it given to Mr. Clayton and so became a part of his property?"

"As the legal adviser of both families, I have complete knowledge of these matters, but I hardly feel free to discuss them. Nevertheless, I will go

so far as to say that Mrs. Clayton's dowry from her father was considerable, and as she immediately turned it over to Mr. Clayton, it is included in the property now held by you."

"Why has not Mr. Henry Cooper presented his claim before?"

"This I am not at liberty to explain."

"Have you any further information or advice to give me?"

"I have told you all I have to say. As I have intimated, had Mr. Clayton known what the end would be, he would certainly have wished the Cooper family to have his property. I leave it to your judgment and conscience to decide as to what may be your duty as well as the wise thing to do."

"I know very little about law, but I have listened to you attentively, and will carefully consider what you have told me. When I have decided what I ought to do I will communicate with you. For the present I can only say that were the Cooper family poor and needy people, I would most willingly settle on them an amount sufficient to relieve them from any financial anxiety. As it is, if it is shown that any money from the Cooper fortune has come to me, I see no reason why it should not be returned to the family.

"But when we come to speak of property which Mr. Clayton inherited from his ancestors, the matter does not seem so clear. It is true that because my grandmother, Margaret Clayton, married my grandfather, Edgar Whittington, against the wishes of her father, Robert Clayton, he disinherited her, leaving all his property to his

only son, her brother John, the father of the late Mr. James Clayton.

"Now, Mr. Robert Clayton, Grandmamma Whittington's father, inherited this property from his father, Richard Clayton, who was, of course, Grandmamma Whittington's grandfather. Grandmamma Whittington said that her grandfather did not object to her marriage. Indeed, I have in my possession a letter which my dying mother placed in my hands with a most solemn injunction never to lose it, nor to speak of it, until I became a woman; this letter was written to my grandmamma by her grandfather before her marriage, and in it he admonished her never to marry a man she did not love, and referred to unhappiness in the Clayton family caused by such marriages. In this same letter he approved of her marriage with my grandfather, Edgar Whittington.

"Moreover, when, through failing health, he became unable to attend to business, and transferred his property to grandmamma's father, Robert Clayton, who was his only child, it was with the understanding that his two grandchildren, grandmamma and her brother John, should, on their father's death, receive equal shares of the property thus assigned. He died before the marriage took place.

"Knowing this to be true, and that grandmamma was the favorite of her grandfather—for with the letter mentioned, my mother also gave me my grandmother's statement to this effect, which I was also to preserve, as it and the letter might prove useful to me—I am sure the Cooper family has no moral claim to the property descended from the

grandfather of my grandmother. Of course, I do not know what right the law may give them, but if the unwritten wishes of the deceased are to be regarded, it seems to me consistent that the wishes of this grandfather should be first considered.

"Under these circumstances, I cannot lightly deliver up an inheritance which would have come to me had the wishes of this grandfather been carried out. He certainly would not have desired that any of his property should pass from his own family to that of the Coopers."

"Do you intend undertaking to establish your claim to all this property?"

"I do not know yet what I ought to do. If all this property rightfully belongs to the Cooper family, it would be wrong for me to contend for the possession of Sunset Park. If all rightfully belongs to me I ought not to shirk duty and responsibility by turning it over to any one who attempts to obtain it wrongfully."

"I have already explained the ground of Mr. Cooper's claim. I will also add that out of a desire to befriend you, because you have so few to advise you, I have come here to inform you of what may be a chance to retain for yourself a comfortable home. As I am also legal adviser of the Cooper family, I must ask you, please, not to mention what I have told you, as, were it to come to their knowledge, it would get me into trouble and might result in my losing their patronage.

"I would be glad to bring about such a settlement between you and Mr. Cooper as would benefit you and occasion him no loss. If you agree to what I

have proposed I will inform him of the terms on which you will settle with him."

"Since I am entitled to all, or none, of the property, I shall not attempt to secure what does not belong to me. Therefore it will be unnecessary to mention your suggestions concerning Sunset Park."

"As your legal adviser and attorney, what instructions have you to give me?"

"At present, none; I must have time to think."

"But, my dear young lady, you do not seem to realize that there is no time to lose. If you place your case in my hands I must leave this evening so as to be on hand to look after your interests. I assure you, I will use my best efforts to see that justice is done you. But this matter cannot wait."

"I have no instructions to give you. In any case, I do not see the advantage of any action, since you have intimated that Mr. Cooper will probably be sustained in any claim he may make."

"Will you enter no protest, make no conditions?"

"Not to-day."

"If you think you can decide upon your course by to-morrow I will remain until morning and telegraph my partner to enter a protest on your behalf, which you can withdraw at any time."

"I cannot promise you an answer even then. Perhaps Mrs. Rodgers can help me to see more clearly. She is in the city to-day."

A quick light shot into Mr. Yates' gray eyes, but was gone in a moment. He quickly asked:

"Who is Mrs. Rodgers?"

"My companion and chaperon, whom you have not met."

"Where did you form her acquaintance?"

"A friend, Mrs. Howard of Boston, recommended her."

"Mrs. Howard, wife of J. W. Howard?"

"The same."

"Where did you get acquainted with Mrs. Howard?"

"When she visited Miss Berkely."

"Who is Miss Berkely?"

"A teacher at Fledding who has always been very kind to me and who takes a great interest in me."

Mr. Yates remained silent for some time, and then continued:

"Well, Miss Seymour, I would advise you to say nothing to any one about these business complications; it will be better to adhere to your principle of managing your own affairs. I am sure you will find the outcome more satisfactory."

"Mrs. Rodgers is a very intelligent, discreet woman, and I shall feel it a great privilege to talk over this matter with her."

"I am sorry, Miss Seymour, that you do not see the wisdom of consulting your legal adviser instead of a woman who has no knowledge of legal proceedings."

"Why, Mr. Yates, I have consulted you and you have told me your opinion. Now I wish to know what Mrs. Rodgers thinks is best, and I am sure she is not so ignorant as you suppose."

"No disrespect to Mrs. Rodgers was intended, I assure you. I never have met her. No doubt she is a most estimable lady. Still, it is hardly probable she understands legal matters."

"Be that as it may, I must know what she thinks of these things."

But little more was said, and presently Mr. Yates asked for a carriage, as he wished to go out to attend to some business.

In the evening Mrs. Rodgers returned in time for dinner, when she met Mr. Yates. She received him in her usual quiet, cordial way. He was polite, but reserved, so the conversation was mostly between Mrs. Rodgers and myself. After dinner Mrs. Rodgers seemed so weary that I begged her to retire at once, resolving to speak to her in the morning.

Aug.—, 18—.—

Early this morning I sought Mrs. Rodgers and told her of Mr. Yates' errand. She considered the matter for a few minutes, and then said:

"Julia, in a case like this I think you need more than one lawyer,—especially so since Mr. Yates is legal adviser for Mr. Cooper, as well as yourself."

"Shall I tell him so?"

"No, I think you would better let him return to the city with the understanding that you will inform him of your wishes later. You must not be hasty in your actions; you ought to have good legal advice from some one having no connection with Mr. Cooper. I cannot tell you what to do."

Accordingly, when I saw Mr. Yates I told him I was still unable to make any decision. He looked angry, but spoke very quietly, saying:

"That leaves nothing for me to do but to return to the city. Yesterday I ordered my partner to enter your protest."

"Please have it withdrawn until I am prepared to tell you, definitely, my decision."

"Well, again I must ask you to say nothing that will involve me in trouble with Mr. Cooper. Should you be writing to Mr. Markham, I ask you particularly not to mention the subject to him. His knowledge of legal proceedings is limited, and he is apt to muddle business matters generally. If he has anything to do with this, he will mismanage and complicate affairs so that it will be almost impossible to straighten them out. He thinks he understands a great deal, and would want to take everything out of your hands at once. After your visit to New York Mr. Markham seemed dissatisfied with what he called your childish attempts to manage affairs, and wanted to find a way to prevent your dictating so much.

"It is not well to repeat such things, but it is necessary for you to understand the situation. You will save yourself considerable annoyance if you tell Mr. Markham nothing."

After Mr. Yates had gone I told Mrs. Rodgers what he had said about Mr. Markham. I was much provoked because Mr. Markham had spoken with so much contempt of my efforts to understand and manage my own affairs.

"But," Mrs. Rodgers remonstrated, "Mr. Markham impresses me as a kind, honest man. To be sure, he cannot understand a lady's being able to transact business, but that is nothing serious, since he cannot hinder your doing as you think best. If I were you I would at once telegraph for Mr. Markham to come to Sunset."

So a telegram was sent asking Mr. Markham to come immediately.

Aug.—, 18—.—

As expected, Mr. Markham arrived at one o'clock to-day. After luncheon Mrs. Rodgers accompanied us to the library, where I told Mr. Markham of Mr. Yates' visit and business. He was greatly astonished, and for a time could say nothing more than to express his surprise. Finally he exclaimed:

"I can't see what Yates means! He knows that it is impossible for Cooper to make good such a claim. Had Mr. Clayton died before Frank was drowned, of course the Coopers would have been Frank's heirs; as it is,—it is preposterous! Why did you not tell him to see me about it?"

"Mr. Yates objected to my telling any one about it,—even Mrs. Rodgers; so I thought I would better see you myself."

"Objected to your telling any one! What did he want you to do?"

"He said I could give him directions as my legal adviser, and he would look after my interests."

"Well, well, well! I know it is generally considered that people must look out for Mr. Yates; he is usually very quiet, but sharp, and always carries things to an issue favorable to himself. But this is a bold, rash piece of business, not in keeping with his usual shrewdness and carefulness. Did he make no suggestion as to what you would better do? He has been legal adviser to the Cooper family for years. Did he make no propositions?"

"None that I could consider for a moment, and

he asked me not to mention what he had suggested, saying it would injure him if it came to the knowledge of the Coopers."

"Well, but I must know what those propositions were."

"I am afraid I ought not to tell. I made no promises, only saying that as I could not consider the proposition, it would be unnecessary for me to mention it. I would be sorry to injure Mr. Yates."

"Injure him! It is very evident he intends to injure you. Doubtless he has calculated upon your youth, inexperience, ignorance and conscientiousness; probably, too, he has noticed your indifference to more wealth than your personal needs require. It is imperative that I know what propositions he made, as it will probably put me in possession of the key to his whole scheme. It is your duty to tell me in self-defense."

"Yes, Julia," said Mrs. Rodgers, "Mr. Markham is right. Yesterday morning when you told me what had been said, I knew Mr. Yates was dishonest and trying to wrong you, but I did not want to arouse your suspicion lest he discover it. I knew there would be less trouble if he went away thinking you were doubtful as to what you ought to do. I think, too, Mr. Markham, you ought to know that Mr. Yates especially objected to your knowing anything about the matter."

"Worse and worse! Well, Miss Seymour?'

I then told Mr. Markham about Mr. Yates' proposition concerning Sunset Park. He seemed more excited than ever, and at last said:

"Ladies, you really must excuse me; I shall have

to go out and think this over alone. This evening I will talk with you again."

After dinner Mr. Markham began: "It will be necessary to employ a first-class lawyer and inform Mr. Yates that in so important a matter you wish to have the assistance of a lawyer who has no connection with the Cooper interest, and thus relieve him from the embarrassment of managing the affairs of two contending parties, and probably pleasing neither. Then your new lawyer must go into the case instructed by you to resist the Cooper claims."

After some further conversation, Mr. Markham continued:

"I shall keep watch of the case. It will be best, however, for Mr. Yates not to know that you have seen me. If he asks who advised your employing additional legal help, say that your friends thought it best. If he objects, ask him why, and tell him you should suppose he would be glad to be relieved of some of the responsibility, and that you do not understand his insisting on keeping everything in his own hands. Maintain that since your friends so advise, you think it best to retain the services of the second lawyer. If possible, avoid talking of this matter alone with Mr. Yates. In any case be careful not to commit yourself to anything in any way."

Mr. Markham also told us that although Mr. Clayton always kept a sharp watch on Mr. Yates, and much of the time had confidential legal advice from the best lawyers, Mr. Yates generally managed to get the better of them all. Nevertheless, Mr.

Clayton continued to employ him because he himself always desired to get the best of a bargain, and for such work Mr. Yates answered his purpose better than most lawyers would. So, taking all in all, when losses and gains were balanced, Mr. Clayton found it to his interest to retain the services of Mr. Yates.

CHAPTER X.

Aug.—, 18—.—

Yesterday being Sunday, Mr. Markham remained at Sunset Park until this morning. He is anxious to secure the services of an able and honest lawyer, and says this affair will amount to nothing further than slightly alarming Mr. Yates and making it easier to get my business out of his hands, which he thinks must be done as soon as possible.

"Mr. Markham," I queried, "do you think it would have been wiser for me to have acted on your advice and not have troubled myself about business matters? Would it have been better to have told Mr. Yates I would leave everything in his hands, to act as he thought best?"

"Now, Miss Seymour, you have not forgiven me for what Mr. Yates told you I said; but really, I did not speak contemptuously of you; I only expressed my doubt of the wisdom of a young girl undertaking to manage such a property as yours."

"Yes, but do you think it would have been better for me to have said, 'Mr. Yates, I am a young girl and understand nothing about these things. I will do whatever you advise?' "

"Your agent is the one to act for you; you should have referred the matter to me."

"But suppose you were like Mr. Yates, between you, what would have become of me? Mr. Yates

insisted that he was the man to attend to this affair and that you must have nothing to do with it. Evidently he thinks you would not enter into partnership in his conspiracy. But suppose you and he were agreed, and for the liberal reward which you believe Mr. Cooper is ready to offer, you were willing to act in Mr. Cooper's behalf, what would become of my interests?''

''I see by the mischievous twinkle in your eyes that you are making fun of the old gentleman.''

''But really, Mr. Markham, I have been dreadfully provoked at you. If it had not been for Mrs. Rodgers, I do not know that I would have sent for you at all. It is true I am only a young girl, but I am trying hard to become a wise woman. I do not like it when you treat me like a child and discourage all my attempts to learn. You have not answered my question yet.''

''Well, in this case it must be admitted that it is certainly fortunate that you are ambitious to be able to manage your own interests. Generally, however, ladies do well to keep out of business matters.''

''This,'' said Mrs. Rodgers, ''forcibly illustrates that intelligence, guided by an earnest desire to do right, will generally bring people through troubles made by those who intend to wrong them. The very characteristics which Mr. Yates depended upon to make his undertaking secure, are the ones that have frustrated his purposes.

''It is evident, in the first place, that Mr. Yates calculated upon Julia's being here alone with the servants, and that consequently there would be no

one to advise her. Since he was surprised when she mentioned Mrs. Howard, Miss Berkely and myself, he probably supposed she had no friends to whom she could apply for counsel.

"In the second place, he had noticed that she was not of an ambitious, avaricious nature, but that she was generous and conscientious. Her delight in Sunset Park led him to believe the possession of this home would satisfy her, and the fear of losing it cause her to secure it hastily by immediately making an assignment of all other property in favor of Mr. Cooper. Last of all, he considered his safety made doubly secure by her ignorance of legal proceedings, and her inexperience in business matters. Apparently, he did not anticipate her reasoning so clearly that if Mr. Cooper's claim were really just, she could not rightfully hold any part of the property.

"Neither did Mr. Yates calculate upon Julia's ability to comprehend the responsibility resting upon her, or to turn his own argument to her advantage, by reasoning that if the wishes of the original owners of the property were to be regarded, they must begin with the intentions of Mrs. Whittington's grandfather. Having judgment to see this clearly, and love of justice to influence her decision, she was able to go to the root of the matter at once.

"So, I am impressed with the thought that intelligence and common sense, controlled by an enlightened conscience and love of justice, will not fail to aid one in business complications. Therefore, I conclude that it is not only safe, but a duty, for women as well as men, to supervise their own affairs."

"Perhaps, Mr. Markham," said I, "this affair will

help to impress you that I am in earnest when I say I intend to understand everything about my property and business. So, if you do not want the inconvenience of explaining things to me, and of my reserving the power of making final decisions, at the end of the year you can resign your position as agent to a school-girl."

"Oh, I do not mind the trouble; I have only wished to save you annoyance. If you are satisfied with what I can do, and will not blame me for mistakes when you act contrary to my advice, I shall manage to get on."

"I think I am not likely to be dissatisfied with what you do, and shall probably need your advice for a long time to come."

* * * * * * *

Aug.—, 18—.—

Mr. Markham engaged a lawyer, Mr. Thurston, and sent him down to Sunset Park. At his dictation I wrote a letter of directions to himself; also one to Mr. Markham, and another to Mr. Yates; which he was to deliver in person. To-day I received a telegram stating that Mr. Cooper had withdrawn his claim, but demanded the payment of Mrs. Clayton's dowry with legal interest on the same from the time it had been given into Mr. Clayton's hands. Mr. Thurston also telegraphed me that the claim was illegal and could not be enforced; but that to permit an investigation would give him a good opportunity to obtain a thorough knowledge of Mr. Clayton's affairs during the last twenty years, which will be of great value to him, as he is to be employed in Mr. Yates' place as soon as these

matters are settled. I replied, instructing Mr. Thurston to ascertain the exact amount of the dowry, for if I have any money that came from the Cooper family I certainly want to restore it.

Aug. —, 18.—.—

Last night, on account of the excessive heat, I slept but little, and so rose very early this morning and went out into the garden. About seven o'clock I went around to the front of the house and had gone up the steps onto the verandah, when I heard a carriage coming up the drive. What was my surprise to see that it contained Mr. Yates and another gentleman!

Mr. Yates greeted me in an unusually cordial manner, and introduced his companion as Mr. Cooper. I suppose I looked the surprise I felt, for Mr. Yates at once said:

"You must excuse this unexpected and untimely visit. Finding there is such a complete misunderstanding of affairs, I thought it best to come at once and talk with you personally, instead of trusting to correspondence.

"After Mr. Thurston's call I went to see Mr. Markham and undertook to explain matters to him. He seemed very much excited over what he had heard and refused to assist me in straightening out the complication. Finding that alone I could accomplish nothing, I have brought Mr. Cooper, that you may learn from himself just what has been done."

They declined my invitation to breakfast, saying they were in haste to return to the city by the next train. Mr. Yates then said:

"We shall be greatly obliged if you will grant us an interview at once."

I seated them in the library, saying:

"If you will please excuse me I will rejoin you in a few minutes. I wish Mrs. Rodgers to be present."

"It is quite unnecessary to disturb Mrs. Rodgers at so early an hour, as this business concerns Mr. Cooper only."

Seeing my hesitation, Mr. Yates added:

"Nothing will be said that will commit you to any course of action. Mr. Markham seems to have received a remarkable impression about my last interview with you. This, taken in connection with the extraordinary instructions you gave Mr. Thurston and myself, made it imperative that Mr. Cooper and I see you at once."

Wishing to ascertain whether he knew of Mr. Markham's visit to Sunset, I asked:

"What did Mr. Markham say?"

"Oh, he told over what you had said of our interview; as usual when he talks of business, he spoke loudly, using many words, and seemed indignant that I had not consulted him instead of coming to you, considering you, as he does, such a mere child. As he seemed quite convinced that I had attempted to take some advantage of you, I have come to inquire what you said that could have caused such an excitement."

"I only repeated what you said to me, and on advice of friends, employed Mr. Thurston to assist you in caring for my interests."

"The only thing he has done has been to confuse

things and treat me as a suspicious character. How did you come to let Mr. Markham know anything about the affair?"

"I see no objection to Mr. Markham's knowing of it."

"Have you taken others into your counsel?"

"I have told only those whose advice I needed. Please excuse me if I decline to mention names."

"You will, at least, tell me what you have said."

"Certainly. I told all you said to me."

"But as a personal favor I asked you not to mention certain items."

On each of Mr. Yates' cheeks burned a bright spot, and it almost seemed as if lightning would flash from his eyes, but his voice continued low and steady. With great effort I remained outwardly calm, as I replied:

"I found it necessary to tell all you had told me."

"To whom?"

"Excuse me, please, but I have already answered that question."

"Well, either you have seriously misunderstood me, or others have seriously misunderstood you. Where this misunderstanding lies is what I want to know."

"I am sure that I did not misunderstand you; I am equally sure that I correctly reported our conversation, and that my friends did not misunderstand me."

"The fact remains that some one has made a mistake. Therefore we are here, and in Mr. Cooper's presence I wish to state that on August —, I visited you and informed you that, inasmuch as it is well

known that had Mr. Clayton anticipated his own and Frank's sudden death, he would most certainly have left his property to Mr. Cooper's family; and that therefore Mr. Cooper feels that the property justly belongs to him. He now knows that I said that in all probability he would be willing for you to retain Sunset Park.

"A different account of this interview has been given, and for this reason I asked Mr. Cooper to accompany me here and allow me in his presence to rehearse the conversation with you. Will you please tell him whether I have correctly stated what I then said?"

"Your statement is certainly incomplete; you represented that Mr. Cooper had legal claims that the court would probably sustain, and urged immediate action."

"I certainly never stated that Mr. Cooper had a legal claim. I did tell you that in my opinion he would be satisfied to settle with you by letting you retain Sunset Park. As to my urging immediate action, I meant that by this means you would leave in Mr. Cooper's mind no doubt as to your desire to deal justly."

"You said nothing that led me to suppose you considered it necessary for me to make such a favorable impression on Mr. Cooper. What did you mean by saying you would telegraph your partner to enter my protest to Mr. Cooper's claim?"

"Mr. Cooper was waiting to learn whether you would concede the justness of his claim. In accordance with your directions I instructed my partner to inform him that you would protest it."

"You see, Miss Seymour," began Mr. Cooper, "I did not know of the expressed wish of Mrs. Whittington's grandfather. I heard that you did not care to own so much property, and also that you were very conscientious and just. Knowing that Mr. Clayton would have left his property to me had he known he would die childless, I supposed you would see the justice of carrying out his will.

"Mr. Yates was mistaken in thinking I would be displeased at his proposition that if you would accept Sunset Park we might arrive at a settlement of mutual benefit. I had not told Mr. Yates of my plans further than to instruct him to express to you my opinion as to who was the true heir of the property. Had things been as I supposed, I intended to ask you to retain one-half the entire property, should you care to burden yourself with so much. As it is, you seem to have as good a right to your grandmother's share as I have to what would have belonged to Mr. James Clayton, had the wishes of this grandfather been carried out.

"However, if you do not feel disposed to admit the moral justice of my claim, we will let the matter drop; only I do not want to be represented as attempting to obtain your property by bringing a lawsuit against you."

"I am amazed at what you and Mr. Yates have said, inasmuch as it is far from being in accord with what Mr. Yates said to me the other day. But we need not discuss the matter further, since you say you do not intend to insist upon your claims."

"But, Miss Seymour, your reports of our conversation damaged Mr. Cooper's character and

injured my reputation as a lawyer. The merest law student, however dishonest, would have known better than to say that a merely moral claim would be sustained in the courts. I think you should give me a written statement clearing me of such unwise and dishonest intention."

"Believing you intended to represent the matter as I have related, it is impossible for me to give you such a statement."

"Oh, never mind, Yates; I am satisfied you did not intend to misrepresent me to Miss Seymour. I am also satisfied that Miss Seymour has done what, to her best knowledge and belief, is right. No one besides Markham and Thurston know much about it; you care nothing about the opinion of the former, and the latter is a lawyer of whom a man in your position need have no fear. So, Miss Seymour, as I am the one chiefly concerned, if you will pardon the annoyance we have given you, we will drop the matter."

Feeling as I did, that Mr. Cooper said this because he saw Mr. Yates could not make me believe that I had misrepresented him, I really did not know what to say; but Mr. Yates broke the awkward pause by observing:

"Well, Mr. Cooper, as this part of our business is finished, shall we take up the question of Mrs. Clayton's dowry?"

"There is not much to be said about that. In accordance with Miss Seymour's directions the matter is being investigated. When the accounts are made up, my son Albert will come to Sunset Park and settle with Miss Seymour. Whatever

accrues to us from this source I have decided to turn over to Albert, so I shall leave him to attend to the finishing up of the business."

They would not remain at breakfast, but hastened back to the village. As he shook hands, Mr. Cooper said:

"Now, Miss Seymour, don't you disturb yourself thinking I want to take away your money. I only supposed you did not care for it, and would be glad to get rid of it, in which case I felt I had the best right to it."

Aug.—, 18—.—

Immediately after the departure of Mr. Yates and Mr. Cooper I sent a telegram to Mr. Markham, in response to which Mr. Thurston arrived to-day.

After hearing my account of the interview on Friday, Mr. Thurston advised me to write him a letter instructing him to settle Mr. Cooper's claim. At his dictation I also wrote letters to Mr. Yates and Mr. Cooper informing them that I expected to be from home for some time, and referred all claims to Mr. Thurston for settlement, declining any further interviews on the subject.

CHAPTER XI.

Aug. —, 18—.—

To-day, Mrs. Rodgers, Parsons and I drove to the camp-ground. It is beautifully situated in a grove on a bluff which slopes down to a little river. As we neared the ground, through the openings here and there we caught glimpses of the white tents and pretty cottages nestling among the trees. When we came in sight of our green and white cottage we saw Mrs. Tate standing in the door to welcome us.

Inside the cottage everything looked cozy, cool and comfortable. Mrs. Rodgers and I occupy the two front rooms upstairs, and Mrs. Tate and Parsons share a room in the rear of mine. Mrs. Tate was quite disturbed because I have no dressing-room, but I find it no hardship to dispense with a few luxuries for the next two weeks, especially when I remember my cramped and inconvenient room at Fledding. Mrs. Rodgers says that when people exchange inconvenience and limited means for luxury and abundance, they are apt to become exacting and unable to endure discomfort. However that may be, I am delighted with my room, which is twelve feet square, and from off each corner of which is cut a small closet. The white China matting, fresh, white muslin curtains, light, easy, cane chairs and my tiny, white-draped bed, give

the room a simple but dainty appearance. Mrs. Rodgers is also pleased with her room, which is the counterpart of mine.

The other rooms upstairs are occupied by our home people who have come to look after the cottage and cook meals for our establishment, as well as to enjoy the meetings. At Mrs. Rodgers' suggestion, in order that all in the cottage may have more of these opportunities, she and I will care for our own rooms, and, assisted by Parsons, will keep in order the sitting-room down stairs.

On the first floor we have a large front room, forty feet long and twenty feet wide, fitted up so that it can be used as a sitting-room or a prayer meeting room. A heavy curtain hangs across the center of this parlor, which can be drawn if we wish to be alone when others are occupying the front part. Mr. Brooks is pleased with this arrangement, and we have invited him to use the room whenever he desires to do so. Also, our people from Sunset and the farms have been told they are welcome to come in and sit here when they want to rest. Back of this large room is a dining-room fifteen feet square, which we can use also as a private sitting-room when the large room is used for prayer-meetings. The kitchen is ten feet square, with pantries and closets. The stairway opens from the dining-room, so that we can be quite private in our living, although such a large portion of the cottage is given up to the public.

Mr. Brooks says that if all who are able to do so would provide accommodations for a few who could not otherwise attend, much more would be accom-

plished. I am glad he is pleased with our arrangement.

After resting, Mrs. Rodgers and I walked over the ground. I was much interested in watching the people as they came, and in the unloading of their provisions and furniture. Here and there, too, men were putting up canvas tents, or giving finishing touches to newly built cottages. All were hurrying to complete their work, as the first services of the camp-meeting will be held this evening.

People say there will be a large attendance and that even more would come if they could afford to buy or rent cottages. Referring to what Mr. Brooks said, Mrs. Rodgers observed that by building a large house with many small dormitories and a large general sitting-room in which meetings could be held, some wealthy person could bring a large number of people within the influence of the meetings. Perhaps the people on my farms and many of their neighbors will come next year if I provide such a building.

Mrs. Rodgers is quite familiar with all these things which are so new and interesting to me.

Aug. —, 18—.—

Mr. Brooks has introduced me to a number of young people from Hampton and I am becoming very well acquainted with them and their friends. Miss Nellie Millburn, who is a teacher in the high-school at Hampton, will make a pleasant companion for me while I am at Sunset. She is a fresh, wholesome, rosy-looking, fair faced girl, with light brown hair and blue eyes, and is a cheerful, happy-hearted, earnest Christian.

I am also greatly interested in Miss Margaret Case, largely on account of her peculiar religious views. She is tall and slight, with dark complexion, black, waving hair and intense black eyes. When calm and undisturbed, she is pale, but when interested, or animated, the color constantly flames and fades in her face. If much excited her whole frame is in a tremor. Miss Case is not a Christian and seems to be quite skeptical. She devides Christians into two classes, namely, hypocrites and self-deceivers.

This evening Miss Millburn told me that Miss Case has had a sad exprience. Her parents died three years ago, leaving her little besides their good name. Since then she has been engaged in teaching. Her relatives seem to be cold-hearted, indifferent people. A wealthy aunt belonging to a city church in which she has obtained a reputation for liberality, expects her niece to pay her a week's visit once a year, and then manifests no further desire to see her until the next year's visit.

Another aunt, in less affluent circumstances, is very attentive to her rich sister, who rewards her with the cast-off clothing of her family, which the poorer sister remodels for her own children. But the homeless orphan niece receives little attention from this aunt, further than to be occasionally welcomed as a guest for two or three days.

The bachelor uncle offers advice, but does not disturb his mind, nor interrupt his questionable amusements by giving any anxious consideration to the happiness and welfare of his niece.

Miss Case's high-strung, proud nature causes her to refer rarely to her lonely, penniless condition,

which she feels very keenly. Her suffering finds expression in her assuming a cynical attitude towards the world generally. Unfortunately, she has come in contact with a number of half-hearted Christians, whose discreditable dealings have stung her afresh. Not having intimate acquaintance with true Christians, it is not strange that she antagonizes the only Christianity which has come under her observation. Recently she has made the acquaintance of Miss Millburn, to whom she has become warmly attached.

Aug. —, 18—.—

To-day I met another bright, good-natured, fun-loving girl, Miss May Harris, whose parents are attending this meeting. Miss May does not question the truth of the Bible nor the reality of Christian experience. But when any one asks her why she is not a Christian, she laughs and says there are enough people making a failure of it now, without her adding another to the throng. To-day some one suggested:

"Suppose, Miss May, you become an earnest Christian and show the others how."

She laughed merrily, her eyes dancing with mischief as she replied:

"Couldn't do it! That's just the trouble. Don't believe I could do as well as you people are doing—so why make matters worse than they are?" And she ran off to join a passing group of girls. After she was out of hearing, the one who had been talking to her remarked:

"May knows her duty and she takes this way to quiet her conscience."

I wonder of this is so. What a strange thing is the human heart! The more I question my own and study others, the more I am perplexed.

Miss Douglas, who often leads young people's prayer-meetings in the tents, attracts me. Her manner is quiet though cordial. Usually she takes very little part in conversation, but is an attentive listener and careful observer. Therefore, when she does speak her remarks are well suited to the occasion, and she never fails to make an impression.

Aug. —, 18—.—

This afternoon several of us were sitting on rustic seats around the trunk of a large tree. As is usually the case here, the conversation turned upon the subject of religion. A young man remarked:

"Well, really, when you think about it, it does seem strange, when we have only a lifetime here, and an eternity beyond, that we should not give our whole effort to preparing for the hereafter."

A young girl who had been making sport of everything, replied:

"Oh, I don't know. I am having a pretty good time here. I mean to go right on and make sure of as much fun out of this world as I can. This life lasts a long time anyway."

"Yes, but according to their accounts, Christians are having a good time, too, and they say they are making sure of a good time hereafter," objected the young man.

"I declare, Fred Williams, I believe you will make a Methodist preacher yet!"

"No, that is the queer thing about it. I believe it

is my duty to be a Christian, and I see the wisdom of such a course; yet I am in no way inclined to make any change by becoming one. Miss Case, do you not think this a strange thing?"

"If I believed in what people call the Christian religion I should not hesitate a moment in making a decision. But never having had any proof of the genuineness of the Christianity of those who profess it, I am in no way inclined to number myself with them."

May Harris sprang to her feet, exclaiming:

"Do you mean to say that Nellie Millburn's Christianity is not genuine?"

"Miss Millburn is naturally an honest, good girl; she and some others think it is because she is a Christian; but had she never heard of the Bible she would have been just as she is."

"No, Margaret," replied Nellie, "that is a mistake. Mamma would tell you that before I was a Christian, everything was smooth with me until my will was crossed; then I was frantically rebellious and difficult to control.

"When I was little more than two years old, one day mamma undertook to compel my obedience. Displeased because my porridge was not in the dish I wanted, I threw my spoon on the floor; mamma told me to pick up the spoon; stamping my feet and shaking my head, I cried, 'No! no! no!' Coaxing, commanding, punishing, failed to bring me to the yielding point.

"After struggling for an hour, I dropped down on the floor and fell asleep, exhausted, but unyielding. Mamma, as tired as myself, left me for a

time, and when I awoke, renewed the struggle. I went to bed unconquered, and in the morning was tied in a high chair and placed in a corner of the room to meditate. At the end of two hours I began to call "Mamma!" When again placed on the floor I picked up the spoon, handed it to mamma and burst into an angry fit of crying.

"As a result of my passion I was ill for several days. Mamma did not consider that I had yielded in an obedient spirit, but simply to regain my liberty. She says that until I was converted I never willingly gave up having my own way. So you see, however different I may now be in this respect, it cannot be set down to the credit of my naturally meek and submissive spirit, but is entirely due to grace."

Fred Williams observed: "Surely you have made out a clear case. Miss Millburn has given us strong proof of the power of Christianity to change human character."

"But," objected Miss Case, "you do not take into consideration that probably Miss Millburn had reached a period when she saw the unreasonableness of her willfulness She is naturally just and honorable; when she realized that her unwillingness to yield her wishes to others sometimes defrauded them of their rights, it would not have been in harmony with her nature to insist upon pleasing herself."

"Oh, that does not necessarily follow," returned Fred Williams. "At least it is not the case with most people. Of course, many strong willed people, because they are just and honorable, will yield to

others when they consider it to be their duty; but this alone would not cause them humbly and graciously to give up their desires, and even suffer injustice rather than persist in what they believe to be in itself right, when by denying themselves, they may relieve others from distress or inconvenience. For example: yesterday when Grandmother Brown took a fancy, that on account of the unusual crowd that had come to hear Dr. L——, it was unsafe to lock up the Bedford cottage and leave it alone as usual, there were some discontented and cross looks, with a prospect of crosser words, as grandma pathetically announced that no more need be said, for she herself would stay. But Miss Millburn restored peace by immediately agreeing to remain in the cottage. Had I not a short time before heard Miss Millburn express delight at the prospect of an opportunity to gratify a life-long desire to hear Dr. L——, I never would have guessed that missing the sermon would be a disappointment."

"Yes," exclaimed May, "and I was as provoked as I could be at Grandma Brown. I would have let her stay if she thought some one must remain, for there was not the slightest need of it. Nellie stayed just to gratify the whim of a childish old lady."

"Well, Miss Case," continued Fred Williams, "how do you account for Miss Millburn's action in this instance? She certainly was not actuated by a sense of justice or honor. Had I been called on to reason out to whom the sermon would do most good, Grandmother Brown or Miss Millburn, surely I must have decided in favor of the latter. So, how do you account for this occurrence?"

"I must reply to your question by asking another. How do you account for the failure of Christianity to produce such results in others?"

"Fair play!" cried May. "We must first come to an understanding about Nellie Millburn. Then we will attend to these others in time. How can you account for Nellie's action yesterday on other ground than that it was an example of what Christian grace can do?"

"I can only say that out of a number of professing Christians with whom I am acquainted, hers is a very exceptional case. We cannot always account for exceptions to general rules."

"Very well," rejoined May, "then by common consent we must admit that if it cannot be explained on the ground of Christian experience, it cannot be accounted for at all. I am satisfied to leave it there.

"Now, I am ready to join in a tirade against the general order of Christians. Will Miss Case open the discussion?"

"I did not wish to enter upon a discussion, and only intended answering Mr. Williams' question by asking why Christianity does not have a similarly modifying effect upon a woman with whom I boarded last summer. She is a professing Christian, an enthusiastic Methodist, a great missionary as far as words go; very much opposed to dancing, theaters and games. Yet all this did not prevent her pilfering little things from my trunk. As she intended sending her daughter away to school, some dainty handkerchiefs with which I had provided myself probably struck her as a desirable supplement to her daughter's outfit. Missing them, I locked both my

trunks. Fearing I might lose the keys if I took them with me, I hid them in a drawer under a pile of towels, and went out to spend the day. The large trunk had a peculiar lock and was not easy to fasten. One of the three hinges of the smaller trunk was broken, and it was difficult to adjust the lid so the trunk could be locked.

"Returning just at tea time, I noticed that my landlady looked much disturbed, and wondered what troubled her. When I went to my room I found both my trunks unlocked! Looking for the keys, I found them in a different place in the drawer from where I had left them. Evidently, the lady had, for some reason, opened my trunks; and, unable to refasten them, became alarmed, and hastily throwing the keys into the drawer, fled from her field of operations.

"I would like to hear an explanation as to what effect grace has had on this person."

"Now it is my turn," called out May. "I am especially interested in this sort of discussion; it is comforting to one of my turn of mind. You see, it would be pretty hard for me to be a model Christian like Nellie,—just enough and no more. So, the more I hear of inconsistent Christians, the more excuse I have for continuing in my own wicked course. Now, it will particularly help me to tell this story. It is perfectly true, for it happened in my uncle's home.

"My uncle is as nearly a perfect Christian as it is possible for any one to be. I am glad there are not many like him, for if there were, very shame would compel me to try to be good. Well, this uncle of

mine is a Methodist minister. Once he was preaching in a place where the people were so good,—at least they said they were,—and so religious, so truly devoted to the church, and loved their pastor so much that they could never quite finish telling about it.

"My uncle had five children, and the parsonage contained seven rooms. When you consider that a pastor needs a parlor in which to receive his rich parishioners, a study in which to work, a dining-room in which to eat, and a kitchen in which to cook, you can make a close calculation as to how snugly my uncle's family were packed into that seven-roomed parsonage.

"For reasons too evident to require an explanation, my uncle was not a rich man. The fact is, that after moving, settling down into the seven-roomed parsonage (please do not forget there were just seven rooms, and by way of description I will add that two of these were just eight feet square), breakages replaced and damages repaired, he had twenty dollars in his pocket. He hoped the official board would soon inquire into his immediate financial needs.

"The brethren and sisters came to church if it did not rain, or they were not too tired; and they listened appreciatively to his sermons (when they were there). A month passed and the twenty dollars were gone. Something had to be done. Uncle was one of those sensitive men who cannot remind people of their duty when they owe that duty to himself, so he could not tell the Board of Stewards that they ought to see that their pastor

received his salary. The last Saturday of the last week of the quarter came. It was nine o'clock in the evening. I forgot to mention that in the meantime Aunt had parted with some of her carefully saved wedding presents, and uncle had sold a number of his precious books, to procure food during the third month of their stay in the place.

"Uncle had retired to his study, once more to ask God to help him in his trouble, when there came a knock at the door. On opening it he found a man who asked him to come with him to a certain part of the city, to marry him, which he did, and received one dollar for his services. He then went to the provision stores, but found all save one, closed for the night. He purchased sufficient to last over Sunday and went home.

"He told no one outside of his family of his experience, but early the next week the people gave him a surprise donation party, and brought an abundance of provisions, besides a good sum of money.

"You see, what I especially admire in those people was the peace and quietness of mind in which they were capable of enjoying their own abundance, all through those three months, without inquiring about the needs of their pastor; and then giving him a donation when they owed him a quarter's salary. Really, a wicked girl like me almost envies them the Christian experience that enabled them happily and contentedly to go on their way to heaven, with such sublime indifference to the welfare of their minister."

Miss Case asked: "Will some one explain to

me in what respect Christian grace had improved these people?"

Nellie leaned forward eagerly, saying: "Oh, but you forget the sublime faith of the minister! He could well afford to go through the painful part of the experience, that he might have such a blessed lesson about God's mighty love to him. And as an answer to Miss Case's question, I would ask, how will you explain the motive that led that minister to bear all that, and still patiently go on with his work as a Christian minister?"

May called out, "No discussion of the main issue until all the witnesses have been heard. Who next?"

CHAPTER XII.

"That reminds me," began Oscar Black, "of my boarding place last winter. The lady of the house had an aged, invalid father living with her. As he was unable to come downstairs, his meals were carried to his room. I noticed that after we had finished our meals, this model Christian daughter would take a clean plate, put on it whatever was left on the table, sometimes even taking pieces from the plates from which we had eaten, and send it to his room. I am quite sure that poor old man never had a hot meal.

"I have heard this daughter, a middle-aged woman herself, make very sad complaints about the extra trouble caused by her old father. Once she told me how, a short time before, he had been seriously ill, and from what she said, he must have suffered a great deal; she told me that for some time, every morning, when she went to his room she expected to find him dead! She told all this as if she were the one to be pitied, instead of the poor old man left to suffer alone all night.

"Finally, I became so disgusted with her selfishness, cruelty and greed, that I removed to another boarding place."

Miss Case remarked: "Judging from my own observations and experience in dealing with professing Christians, these stories pretty nearly represent their average conduct. Can you explain in what way grace has improved them?"

"Now, Miss Case," protested May, "you must wait until we have heard all the evidence."

"Well then, Miss Harris," began Will Thompson, "I have an uncle who is a physician. He gets exasperated with professing Christians who talk so much about doing good, but never do anything. I heard him tell of being called to visit a very sick babe whose mother was a church member. They were both anxious about its condition. While talking about it they heard a child crying, as if in great distress. The mother, hastily laying her babe in the cradle, ran out of doors. Presently she returned, saying that it was not one of her children.

" 'But,' asked the doctor, 'did you find out what was the matter with the child?'

" 'No.'

" ' Did you see where the child was?'

" 'No.'

"The doctor at once went out and in the alley found a little child, terrified almost into convulsions by a large dog that was not even looking at him; but he was as much frightened as if it had been a mad dog. The doctor relieved the child, and on returning to the house, found the mother quite angry with him. She exclaimed:

" 'I suppose you can prescribe for my child better now.'

" ' Yes, madam, I can,' he replied.

"That is a specimen of the stories he tells of his experience as a medical practitioner, and they are about professing Christians as frequently as others."

"Now, Miss Case," warned May, "you are to say nothing until all have spoken. Who next?"

"My brother," responded Miss Chaffe, "is also a doctor. Last winter an unfortunate girl who had been turned out of doors by her father, was very ill. My brother notified the ladies of the church to which my mother belongs, that the girl was in a dying condition, and utterly without food or warm clothing. She had been found in a deserted shanty. They said: 'Let the poormaster look after her.' As she had wandered there from another town, the poormaster declined to act, saying that he had had trouble enough with cases from other towns. If they waited until matters were adjusted with the town from which she came, the girl would die. These church ladies finally furnished her with a few old bed quilts, and the business men of the town contributed a little money. My mother, the minister's wife and the doctor did the rest, and took care of that girl through a three-months' illness. When she was able to be moved, my mother brought her home, kept her until she was strong, and then found her a place to work in another city.

"Shortly after this, revival services were held in the church. One of the members asked my brother to come to the meetings and become a Christian. He replied, 'No, madam! If yours is the only sort of Christianity there is, I should consider myself disgraced by possessing it. You go around to society and ladies' meetings, to church festivals and missionary gatherings; in Sunday-school you teach a class of well dressed children of rich parents; in prayer-meeting you pray for such respectable sinners as I am. But if a Magdalene pass near you, you gather your silken robes about you lest

you be contaminated. She may be sick, freeze and die, but your dainty feet never step within her room to relieve her sufferings, and by this means, perhaps win her to a better life. You are not like Him whom you call "Savior." He never shrank from helping the lowest and vilest of sinners that needed help. I am better than you are, for I am like Him in one thing, at least. He scorned hypocrites and I scorn you.' "

"Now, Edd Butterworth, you have told us nothing yet."

"As Miss Harris seems to be class-leader and has called on me, I suppose I must say something, whether or no. Luckily, I am prepared.

"In G——, where I resided a few years ago, lived a rich, active Christian lady whose husband was dead. She taught in the Sunday-school, helped in all church enterprises and was the life of all social church gatherings. She was popular with all classes, and the rich people of the church almost overwhelmed her with favors.

"By one of those strange turns of fortune, as suddenly as unexpectedly, she found herself a poor woman, with an income of about four hundred dollars a year. In addition to her other misfortunes she fell ill, first with nervous prostration; then a fall so injured her spine that she was never able to sit up again.

"Hoping to stem the tide, she did not at first make known her straitened circumstances. Hearing of her illness, her professed friends thronged the house, making anxious inquiries and almost burying with flowers the table, mantels, and whatever would

hold them. No doubt some of these people planned for her funeral, and in their hearts schemed how they might obtain a desirable prominence by providing floral offerings that in beauty and artistic arrangement should surpass those of their rival neighbors.

"After a few days it began to be whispered about that Mrs. Truby was not only almost penniless, but that her creditors were preparing to dispose of the mansion in which she lived, and that she had engaged board with a poor woman who lived in a five-roomed cottage. Her friends said little of their intentions, but one by one they ceased visiting her, and by the time she was settled in the cottage she rarely saw her old associates. In a short time it really seemed as if no such person had ever moved in the social circles of G——, so completely did she seem to have been forgotten.

"A few friends remained faithful. To one of these she once remarked that, since her former friends could receive no further benefit at her hands, they troubled themselves no more about her.

"So, there she lay for weeks at a time, without seeing a friend. The woman with whom she boarded was kind to her, but she, too, was poor, and largely dependent upon her own exertions for a livelihood; so Mrs. Truby had many hours of loneliness and suffering. Her mind preyed upon itself and finally gave way; soon after, she died a raving maniac, without doubt a victim to the cruel indifference and selfishness of the church she had served so faithfully in better days.

"Some thought she ought to have had sufficient

strength of character and Christian faith to have upheld her in her afflictions, and that was about all they said.

"Of her long suffering from nervous diseases, the agony from her spinal trouble, the days and nights during which she could not sleep, the loneliness and friendlessness of her situation,—these never received any consideration.

"The fact was, her former friends found it more agreeable to prepare papers to be read at the various church gatherings, than to do anything so obscure as visiting and cheering a dying woman, who could do nothing in return for such kindness. It was more popular to be members of the various church committees, and much easier to manifest their interest in words than in deeds."

Miss May then called on me, but I excused myself on the ground that I lacked experience, although the little that I had observed led me to an unquestioning belief in the genuineness of Christianity. I did not mention them, but I thought of Esther, Mrs. Rodgers and Mrs. Tate. However, asking pardon if I overstepped my privilege, I remarked that I had noticed that the narrators failed to call attention to the examples of true Christian conduct on the part of several of the people referred to.

"Well, Miss Douglas," proceeded May, "you have said nothing. I think you should be appointed judge, sum up the evidence, and give a decision on the question discussed."

"It seems to me," responded Miss Douglass, "that all we have heard does not invalidate the evidence of Miss Millburn's Christianity, while, as Miss

Seymour has intimated, it does bring into prominent relief several fine examples of true, earnest Christian life. Moreover, were we each called on to give examples of real Christian living, as Miss Seymour also intimated, we must each turn witness to the reality of Christian experience. Even Miss Case, since she cannot account for Miss Millburn's peculiar spirit of self-denial on other ground than that of Christian grace, must testify to knowing at least one person whose Christianity cannot be successfully denied. Since there is one such genuine example, even were there no others (and we know there are), I must conclude that Christianity is a fact; and that with one such example before us, we are responsible if we do not obey its teachings. This proved, our next step must be to pronounce judgment upon the accused.

"Concerning the pretenders to Christianity of whom we have just heard, we will not condemn them to any worse punishment than that which has already overtaken them. I can conceive of nothing more terrible than to have such a character, and to know one's self guilty of such contemptible and wicked conduct, as in the various cases cited, to say nothing of the merited scorn they receive from Christians and doubters alike.

"Surely, those of us who pray, must realize their danger, and we will ask God mercifully to awaken them to a knowledge of their dreadful condition.

"As for us, can we fail to see that these sad recitals are but cumulative proof of the need of consecrated Christian lives, and that we should, as far as

possible, counteract the diabolical influences going out from such lives as those depicted?

"May, will not people ask wherein Judge and Mrs. Harris have failed, that their daughter should remain indifferent about her own salvation and that of others? Our Savior said, 'He that is not with me is against me.

"For myself, I never before felt so deeply the profound necessity of walking close to God, lest I, too, become a stumbling block and rock of offense to others. Let us pray.

"Our Heavenly Father:

"Here, under these solemn circumstances, listening to these most appalling accounts of the crimes and unfaithfulness of those who falsely call themselves Christians, we bow before Thee, to ask Thy forgiveness for our own sins of omission and commission.

"We pray Thee to help us never to forget that a most awful responsibility rests upon us each, as individuals; that each of us must say:

'A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify,
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.'

"May each of us improve this opportunity to beseech Thee,

'Help me to watch and pray,
And on Thyself rely,
Assured if I my trust betray,
I shall forever die.'

"We also ask Thee to stamp indelibly upon our hearts the solemn truth, that through our refusal to

obey Thy commands, we may not only lose our own souls, but may also become responsible to Thee for the loss of others, whom our lives may influence.

"We ask all this in the great name of Christ. Amen."

Aug. —, 18—.—

Last evening while Miss Douglass was talking May Harris began to sob, and continued weeping while we were praying. When we rose from our knees, she broke away from us and ran to her cottage. Finding the services at the stand closed, we all quietly went home.

Although I did not retire until about one o'clock and did not sleep until three hours later, I rose in time for the sunrise prayer-meeting. All things considered, I am glad that I was the only one of our last evening party who was present.

The leader prefaced his remarks by stating that, on the previous evening, he had gone to a retired place to meditate and prepare for the morning meeting. While there he had been interrupted by a conversation which had greatly exercised him, and prevented his concentrating his thought upon any theme. Then, to my consternation, he proceeded to give an account of our last night's discussion, and followed this with an exhortation, adding:

"Brethren, I will ask each of you to answer for himself the question: What is there in my life to make Christianity lovely and desirable to the young?

"Have we not been making serious mistakes? While there must not be the least abatement of earnestness in insisting upon outward religious observances, and in demanding an appearance of

Christian sweetness and peace, there ought to be no neglect in dealing thoroughly with selfishness. Christians should be constantly warned against becoming so absorbed in their own interests that they forget the consideration due to those around them.

"These young people come into our homes as sons and daughters, as relatives, boarders or guests. While I trust that none present have been guilty of the atrocious crimes of which I heard last night, it may be well for you and me often to ask, as one of old once asked of a king in Israel, 'What hath he seen in thine house?'

"When cases of need have come to us, have we said in deeds, if not in the plain words I have so often heard from the lips of other people, 'I have enough of my own to care for,' or 'Charity begins at home,' or 'Mr. so and so should attend to this—he is rich and has the time'? And thus, because we are unwilling to forego something we desire to do or have, or because we are unwilling to undertake what we think another should do, the sick are uncared for; the sad hearted left to despair; the sorrowing are not comforted; the hungry are not fed. Do we think the grounds upon which we excuse ourselves cause the suffering of these afflicted ones to be less? With full knowledge of suffering within reach of our homes, how often do we sit down to our well supplied tables, and thoroughly enjoy the palatable meal provided for us, without a thought of the less fortunate? Does the knowledge of their suffering ever prevent our enjoying profound, refreshing slumber in our comfortable beds?

" 'Oh,' you say, 'I cannot be supposed to know of

and alleviate all the trouble in the city or country; if one were to undertake to hunt up all the people who are in distress, there would be time for nothing else. Moreover, were I to spend all my time and substance in that way, I would soon be as bad off as the worst, and need help myself. Besides, people who do right are never in such trouble.'

"Well, suppose we knew that we or our children, at some future time, through misfortune, would be situated as some of these are; suppose, even, that in some way we fall into wrong-doing, which eventually brings us to destitution and suffering; what would we want Christian people to do? When we are able to answer that question, we shall be prepared to understand our duty to those who are now thus circumstanced.

"Our young people are taking note of what manner of Christians we are; they read us very readily. If those in our homes see in us selfishness and indifference to others; if they see that we are interested in them only to the extent of making a very close calculation, as to how little comfort and attention we can give them in return for the amount they pay for their board; or how much we may benefit socially, or in any other way, from their presence in our homes; or that we are more interested in the worldly interests of our sons and daughters than in their spiritual welfare, these young people are quick to draw conclusions.

"On the other hand, while, if these young people are boarders, we make it clearly understood that we admit them as such as a business matter, and expect a fitting remuneration; or if they are with us as

guests or relatives, that we expect from them not only courtesy, but loyal, true friendship; or if they are our sons and daughters, that we expect the obedience, reverence and consideration due from children to their parents; we must also give them reason to know we are not only apparently, but really interested in their well-being in every way; that we truly love them. We may be sure that such kindness prepares for us a way by which we can greatly influence them for good.

"I am thoroughly convinced that much of the indifference of our young people is due to the careless, indifferent, selfish lives of many professing Christians. Dear friends, let us, individually, look into this matter. Thousands of pious professions will not counterbalance the evil effects of one selfish act. I feel as if this were an evil calling for prayer and fasting, that the sin of selfishness may be cast out from among us. 'To your tents, O Israel,' and tarry before the Lord until you know you have been given power to lead lives in which God can glorify Himself."

This afternoon, the minister who led the early morning service took charge of the young people's general meeting. He spoke from the words, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." After saying that as he understood there were many unconverted young people present, he would address his remarks chiefly to them, he proceeded to explain the circumstances under which the words of his text were spoken, and in the course of his remarks, when making applications, he said: "Among the various excuses you give for not becoming Christians, many,

probably all of you, would say that you see so many inconsistencies among those who profess Christianity, that you decline making any attempt at leading a religious life.

"We will not discuss the possibility of your being mistaken,—of your having misunderstood some really good people; we will not consider the probability of your changing your mind in the case of many of whom you complain, did you understand all the circumstances. Unfortunately, we must admit that too many professing Christians are unworthy of the name. We know, too, that the disposition to cover up, or ignore the shortcomings of unworthy church members, is a great and crying evil of our times. Many say that we ought not to expose the faults of our church family, that it does more harm than good. Were these faults not known by non-Christians there might be some reason in the argument. As it is, I do not agree with them. We cannot expose what is already known, and every professing Christian is, with occasional exceptions, generally understood by his unconverted acquaintances. On the other hand, by ignoring such wrongdoing we apparently give our approval of such awful practices; we also cause suspicion to rest upon good people, whereby the unconverted may be led to misjudge them, thus adding to the evil already existing.

"It seems to me wiser to acknowledge the fact that such people are not true Christians, and personally to protest against their recognition as such by allowing them to remain in the church.

"But, laying all these considerations aside for the

present, let us assume that Christian people generally are as bad as some claim they are. Does all this lessen the sin of your refusing to be friends of the Savior who offers to give you the best things in heaven and earth? But you do not believe in the Savior? And why not? Because you have seen so many pretenders? It would surprise me, if, in so intelligent a congregation of young people, one would permit himself to give such an illogical answer as that! I do not believe there is one person here who never knew a Christian who led a life consistent with his profession. One such life proves the possibility and truth of Christian experience, and renders you as responsible as if the rest of the world were all true Christians."

At the close the speaker exhorted the Christian young people to pray for help to testify by their lives, as well as their words, to Christ's power to save from sin. He also warned them against habits of carelessness, which after a time would lead to unfaithfulness; he believed that many who are now dishonoring the Lord by their inconsistent lives, (unless they had deliberately chosen a life of hypocrisy,) were probably as earnest when they began, as any young person present; but by yielding to little temptations at first, they finally became a dishonor to the church, and a stumbling block to the unconverted. He also admonished them not to be influenced by Christians who excused and tried to cover the sins of false professors, but to be outspoken in condemning the same; otherwise, they themselves would become partakers in their transgressions.

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CHAPTER XIII.

In these days I began to realize that, instead of being taught by me, Julia was becoming my teacher. As the years have gone by this has become more and more apparent.

On her return from camp-meeting, Julia wrote me that she had committed herself and all her interests into the hands of the Lord, and He had given her great peace; her not understanding the simplicity of the terms on which Christ saves us, was what had hindered her finding this peace some time before. However, she was as yet undecided as to how she was to manifest outwardly the spiritual change of which she was conscious. The earnestness and enthusiasm of the Methodist people whom she knew, inclined her to identify herself with them. But she was not sure that the rules of that church did not exact more than was required by the teaching of the Bible, and she would not join a church whose rules she could not promise to obey.

While Julia was at camp-meeting drinking in divine truth, Mr. Cooper was making important plans and arranging to carry them out. His son Albert, a young man about twenty-two years old, had just finished his course at the academy, and his father wished him to study law. As yet he had borne no responsibility, and felt no ambition to accomplish or acquire more than was connected with his daily amusements. Hitherto his father

had regarded and treated him as a boy; consequently his rather slow nature had not awakened to matters that interest men; he had given little attention to anything beyond the sports and exercises of his school life. When at home he spent most of his time with the dogs and horses, and in hunting.

As Mr. Cooper was reserved in the presence of his family, he and Albert had never come to the mutual understanding usual between father and son. Albert was, therefore, somewhat surprised when his father, on his return from Sunset Park, called him to the study and began giving him a detailed account of the history and fortunes of the Clayton family. He told him of his late visit and remarked: "I saw at once that Yates had made a mistake, and that he entirely misunderstood the girl. In as easy a way as possible, I changed the appearance of our motives in coming, and made it obvious that I did not know the family history, and consequently had not understood the situation. I have now another plan which I wish you to carry out."

"I?"

"Yes; I want you to familiarize yourself with the Clayton business affairs, and then go to Sunset Park, ostensibly to settle the matter of your Aunt Clayton's dowry; but really to get acquainted with Miss Seymour. She has seen few young gentlemen; if you are careful and succeed in making a good impression, there is no reason why you should not, in a short time, marry her. When in possession of her fortune you will be the richest man in the country."

For several minutes young Cooper stared at his

father, his face very red and his hands thrust into his pockets. At last he ejaculated:

"But I do not want to get married!"

"Neither do I want you to, but, as you see, if you secure the money you must marry Miss Seymour, and if you do this at all you must do it at once."

"I thought you wished me to read law."

"Certainly; the more property you have, the greater the necessity for your having a thorough knowledge of law. Your marriage need not interfere with your plans in the least; you will go on just the same as before."

"With all that property to look after there will be time for nothing else; I prefer a more free and easy life."

"Oh, so far as that is concerned, Yates and I will look after your interests as we always have done, until you are ready to settle down. You are too inexperienced to undertake that sort of thing yet."

"Perhaps the young lady does not care any more for marrying than I do."

"A young fellow like you may rely upon himself to persuade a girl to marry him."

"I do not know, in the least, how to go about it, and think I shall not be able to manage it. I have not thought of marrying for years yet."

"All you will have to do, after settling affairs, will be to agree with Miss Seymour in her wishes and opinions, and to be very attentive and entertaining."

"But after I marry Miss Seymour what shall I do with her? Who wants to be tied to a wife? There would be no more hunting, yachting, or having a good time."

"Have no fears,—we will manage all that. I tell you she is a very pretty girl; if you want a handsome wife, this is the best chance you will ever have."

"I do not want a wife at all."

"Well, I have told you what is best to be done. I shall expect my directions to be followed."

"Very well, sir, but I am not likely to succeed."

This father, who realized how incapable his son was of undertaking large business enterprises, with the natural partiality of parents, never doubted his being able to please so bright a girl as he had perceived Julia to be. It never occurred to him that his untrained, somewhat awkward son, was hardly a suitable companion for one so cultured and refined as Julia Seymour.

So it happened that one afternoon in September, Mr. Albert Cooper called at Sunset Park. Julia received the blundering, embarrassed young man, with wonder and trepidation, but her doubtful manner soon changed to a cordiality that put him more at his ease. Her quick sympathy with any sort of distress compelled her to put forth an effort to relieve her disconcerted visitor. Albert, in his gratitude for her kindness, thought he never saw so beautiful a girl as Julia, in her dainty blue muslin and white ribbons.

Unaccustomed to business interviews, Albert did not know how to introduce his subject; at last he began:

"Miss Seymour, I have called to see about the dowry of my aunt, Mrs. Clayton."

"As I have placed the entire matter in the hands

of my lawyer, Mr. Thurston, for settlement, I must refer you to him."

"My father gave me these accounts and statements to show you, and told me to get the amount these papers call for."

"You can place them before Mr. Thurston and he will tell you what to do with them."

"Miss Seymour, the fact is, I do not understand this business. Except to spend the allowance my father has given me for the last three years, I never have had anything to do with money matters. My father told me to arrange this in a certain way, and you say it must be done in another way. I do not know what to do."

Appreciating the boyish frankness of her guest, and seeing that Albert was apprehensive of what his father would think of his management, Julia followed her inclination to assist him as she would have helped a troubled child.

"I can sympathize with you, Mr. Cooper, for when I came to Sunset Park a few months ago, I was quite ignorant of everything outside of school life. I found myself placed at an especial disadvantage because I did not understand business matters. So I have studied harder than I ever did in my life before."

"You do not seem to be getting much fun out of your money. Most girls would go in for a good time."

"I do not know how that may be, but if I manage this property in a Christian way, I must understand these things. Mr. Thurston has helped me a great deal by pointing out such passages in my law books

as I need to consider. These I have studied carefully, and I think I understand pretty well the points that apply to Mrs. Clayton's dowry. If you will come to the library I will explain the matter as best I can."

In great astonishment Albert followed Julia to the tastefully furnished library, which had undergone a great change during the last few months. All the moldy old books for which she had no immediate use, were placed in cupboards having handsomely paneled doors. Many of the shelves with glass doors were still empty. But it was entertaining to look over the titles of the new books which had been recently placed in some of the cases. There was a full line of classical poetry and standard fiction; here was a case full of theological works; in this were Ruskin and Emerson's writings; while in another case was to be found the best that had been written on philosophy and metaphysics; near by was a fine collection of physiological and anatomical works; then, an array of choice histories and biographies; there were also a few new scientific works and a number of miscellaneous books; the much prized volumes of law, and a generous supply of reference books completed the present acquisition.

A thoughtful stranger would have wondered how a girl came to make such selections. Soon after her arrival at Sunset Park Julia had drawn upon Mrs. Rodgers, Mrs. Howard, Mr. Brooks and myself for lists of books. Mr. Thurston seemed particularly to enjoy making up and discussing such inventories; even Mr. Markham was put under contribution. Besides, Julia soon learned to read care-

fully such book notices as appeared in her magazines and papers, thus adding to previous selections.

It was in this room that young Mr. Cooper found himself, and in a few minutes the ponderous tomes were before him, and Julia was explaining and proving that he had no legal right whatever to Mrs. Clayton's property.

"Nevertheless," she continued, "I do not want any money that may have come from your family, and have instructed Mr. Thurston to ascertain the amount of Mrs. Clayton's dowry, with the legal rate of interest since it came into Mr. Clayton's hands, and pay it to your family."

Albert moved uneasily in his chair, and at last broke out:

"You are the queerest girl I ever saw! My sisters never read such books as these; all they care for is an exciting novel, which they will sit up half the night to finish. Do you really like to read such books?"

"Why, don't you see, unless I inform myself, I never shall know how to manage my affairs? I must read and study, whether I like it or not. However, I can candidly say I do enjoy it most thoroughly."

"Well, so long as they have plenty of money to spend as they please, I don't believe Belle or Kate would trouble themselves about where or how it was obtained."

"But you know, we have to be careful about the use of money, or it will do ourselves and others a great deal of harm; it is a great power either for good or evil."

"I have never thought much about these things. Father always looks after everything, and all we know is, that he lectures us when we spend too much."

"I do not know how it would be if I had parents to look after things. Probably I should not feel as I do now, and perhaps I would take less interest. Still, I think I should want to know for the sake of knowing. I would like to understand what is going on in the world and how people do things."

"Do you like to read history? There is so much here."

"Yes, but as I know more of history than of almost anything else, I shall read other subjects first."

Albert then intimating his intention of leaving, Julia asked:

"How long do you intend remaining in the place?"

"Oh, I am from town for a week, but do not know how long I shall be here."

"If you would like to look over these books, please feel free to do so; or if you would like to take a look at the country, there is a pretty good saddle horse in the stable which you are welcome to use. Then, if convenient, I shall be glad to have you take dinner with me to-morrow evening."

The next morning Albert was back at Sunset Park. Julia left him in the library taking down and putting up books. On returning she found him in a brown study, and to her inquiry as to whether he had enjoyed the books, he rejoined:

"I don't understand it at all! Yesterday you showed me that we have no legal right to my aunt's

dowry,—that we could not compel you to pay it. Yet you say you are going to return it with interest. Why do you do that? I am sure we would not have done so."

"That seems a strange question. If for no other reason, do you suppose my self-respect and sense of honor would allow me to keep money that came from your family? But aside from this, I have decided to lead an earnest Christian life. I could not do this, and retain money that came from people who would not willingly have given it to me. A Christian must be morally as well as legally honest."

"My parents and sisters call themselves Christians, I suppose, but they believe one should keep all he can get. In such a matter I am sure they would act differently from you. I know that once when Belle had spent all her allowance and did not wish father to know it, she coaxed me to lend her part of mine. At first she made excuses that she could not spare the money to pay me; finally she only laughed when I asked her for it. She vexed me so, that to pay her off I told father about it, which frightened her very much, as she expected he would take it from her next quarter's allowance, and she was badly in debt. But father only said that it would teach me to be sharper about trusting people."

Just then Miss Case arrived. She had come to stay with Julia until Monday morning. After the introduction and some conversation in which Albert took little part, they were called to luncheon, to which Julia had invited him to remain.

Some casual remarks about camp-meeting turned

the conversation upon religious subjects. Miss Case, who had admitted that she could no longer doubt the truth of Christianity, and was earnestly endeavoring to follow her convictions, incidentally remarked:

"It is not so easy to keep the Golden Rule as a mere critic might suppose. I used to say I was as good as any Christian, and a great deal better than many of them. I now know that I was not as good as any true Christian, much less being better."

"What do you mean by the Golden Rule?" inquired Albert.

"To illustrate, take this example. A young girl who is attending school, boards where I do. Really, she never seems to have even a wrong thought, but she knows very little,—will never know much more. She has taken a great fancy to me and frequently comes to my room. She cannot talk, knows nothing to talk about. I feel that I ought to be kind and polite to her; but to any remark I make she simply smiles and replies 'Yes' or 'No.' For the last week she has thus spent two hours with me every evening, and I am beginning to feel that I cannot endure it. Yet, if I were a young girl, among strangers, lonesome and homesick, I should want some one to be kind to me, and so I try to act accordingly. Before I became a Christian, I would have taken a book and read, leaving her to sit there until she chose to go away. In other words, the Golden Rule simply means doing by others as you wish them to do by you."

"Do you think any one does that?"

"Oh, yes, Miss Seymour does."

"Miss Case! I have had so little opportunity to

do good to any one, you do not know whether that is true or not."

"Well, is it not true of Mrs. Rodgers?"

"I do not know what Mrs. Rodgers would say to that question, but from what I have been able to learn of her life, she is the exemplification of the Golden Rule."

"I hope," said Albert, "that I may have the pleasure of meeting this Mrs. Rodgers."

"You may, for she will be home to dinner," returned Julia.

CHAPTER XIV.

During Miss Case's visit Albert was in the company of the young ladies a great deal, visiting at the home, taking drives, attending a lawn party given in honor of Miss Case, and accompanying them to church, not omitting even the class-meeting. His amazement increased with every day of his acquaintance with Julia and her friends. When the time came for him to return to his home, as he bade good-bye, he said:

"Miss Seymour, I have learned a great deal since coming here, and have quite new ideas as to what it is to be an honest man; I have also a different view of Christianity. The people I know who belong to the church, do not make their religion a part of their lives as you do; I did not know that any one did that. I supposed they belonged to the church because it was the proper thing to do.

"I am going home to work—to try to make the best of myself. My father will be displeased, but I have made up my mind that I will be an honest business man, in whose dealings, as you express it, there can be nothing that could be pronounced illegal in either moral or civil courts."

Probably the young man had never made so long a speech before in his life. His face and neck looked so red and swollen that he seemed almost choking. Julia replied:

"I am so glad, and hope that you also intend to be an earnest Christian."

"Oh, I am all mixed up about that. I say, do you know, I have done nothing my father sent me here to do; there will be a fine row when I get home. Miss Seymour, although I am a year older than you, you are much wiser and know a great deal more than I. If you would be my friend and think of me as a big, awkward boy who needs teaching, it would do me a lot of good."

"Certainly, you shall be my brother, and I will scold and lecture you in a real sisterly way."

"Well then, I shall go home, think about it all, and before I begin my law studies I'll come down and talk everything over with you, and you shall scold me as much as you please."

This was the first time in Julia's life that any one had appealed to her for help in this way. Inexperienced though she was, she realized that this young man's hitherto dormant nature was awakening, and that much depended upon the help given him at this critical time; he could choose the right or wrong with equal ease.

Julia would have been much more concerned had she known how little he had been taught of the difference between right and wrong; that it was only because Albert was, as yet, so much of a child, —a child, too, who developed slowly—that with his abundant opportunity, he was not already hardened in wickedness; had she known of the father's plans for his son's future, she would have felt she could do but little to help him; but Julia would have been discouraged had she known his mother, whom he resembled somewhat in character. Never having been roused to self-sacrifice, she had grown into a

selfish, careless, ease-loving, rather stupid woman. Certainly, Julia would have regarded Albert's case as hopeless had she known his sisters, who had inherited their mother's selfishness, low ideals and indifference, and their father's intellect, as well as his inclination to take every advantage possible of those with whom he dealt; to all of this, the young ladies added a certain amount of vanity, with a love of display, which was peculiarly their own.

As Albert traveled homeward, he slowly turned over in his mind what would be the situation when he should present himself to his father. He could plan no course, formulate no statement, by which to make known his new ideas. When he reached home he did not announce his arrival, but went straight to his room, and without even removing his boots, threw himself upon the bed and slept heavily until the luncheon bell rang.

When Albert roused himself and went down to the dining-room, he found the family already seated at the table. His father looked at him sharply, asked a few commonplace questions and relapsed into silence. His mother, without speaking and, as it seemed, reluctantly, took the trouble to pour him a cup of tea. Belle's first remark, as he shuffled his knife, fork and spoon about, was:

"Well, I see you are clumsy as ever."

Kate chimed in with, "Yes, your absence was quite a relief. The Seytons were here two days, and I was thankful to be spared the mortification of having to introduce such an uncouth youth as a member of the family."

"Lucky for me," growled Albert. "I suppose your

English colonel was as dull and stiff as usual. 'Aw, weally!' is all he knows enough to say. I always want to thump him on the back or trip him up."

"Yes, you have such elegant tastes and manners."

"Oh, do be quiet!" interrupted Mrs. Cooper. "I dread to have you children all at home, you make such a tumult."

"Get your girls married off as quick as you can, mother, and then perhaps we can get along."

"Yes," retorted Kate, "then you can keep your dogs in the drawing-room, and have all the dirt and litter in the house that even you can desire."

"Humph!" was Albert's only reply.

Then the girls began an altercation between themselves over their plans for the afternoon.

Luncheon finished, Mr. Cooper asked Albert to follow him to his study, and when there inquired in a brisk way:

"Well, sir, how did you get along?"

"Oh, Miss Seymour is not such a muff as to want to marry me."

"You did not ask her to marry you yet!"

"No, sir, I was not quite dunce enough to do that. I do not want to marry her, and if I did, she has too much sense to have me."

"Well, what about the money? Did you settle that business?"

"Father, I can't think what you meant by sending me on such a fool's errand. When I pulled out that envelope of papers you gave me, Miss Seymour walked me into the library, opened her law books and proved that we have not the shadow of a legal

claim to the money. Then she told me that she considered we have, what she called a moral right to the money, and that she had directed her lawyer to find out how much Mrs. Clayton had received, and pay us that amount with interest. Miss Seymour said she had told all this to you. Why did you send me there?"

"I thought if you were the sharp young fellow you ought to be, you would soon convince the young lady that she owed us a large sum of money, and would probably get more than I could. Were either of your sisters in your place I am sure they could have done so. At the same time, I was pretty sure that if you tried, you could marry one of the richest women in the country."

"Well, Miss Seymour is a great deal brighter than you suppose, and I am not such a conceited puppy as to think I could do anything of the sort."

"What did you do?"

"Nothing, but learn more in a week than I ever knew before in my life. I have made up my mind to be a decent man, something I never thought of before."

"Well, how are you going about it?"

"In the first place I am going to study law with all my might. When that is finished, I'll look about to see what next."

"That is all right. In the meantime you can keep up your acquaintance with Miss Seymour, and when the time comes she will marry you."

"As far as that is concerned, I may as well tell you that will never be. I do intend to keep up my acquaintance with Miss Seymour, but she would not

marry such an ignoramus as I, even if I wanted her, which I do not. Just compare her with Belle or Kate! She knows more now than they will ever know,—or our whole family for that matter. If I were thinking of getting married, I'd rather have that black-eyed Miss Case I met at Miss Seymour's; she would just suit me."

"Who is Miss Case?"

"Oh, a sharp, handsome school teacher who was visiting Miss Seymour."

By this time Albert seemed to be overwhelmed with his own boldness, and further utterance just then was impossible. His father stared at his crimson face and bulging eyes for some minutes, apparently at a loss to understand him. At last, speaking very slowly, he said:

"I am not just sure what you mean, but I want you distinctly to understand that you cannot marry a poor girl. What would your sisters think if you brought such a wife here?"

"I wonder more what Miss Case would say if she saw them. I doubt if she would touch them with the tip of her dainty boot. But you need not concern yourself, sir; Miss Case is too much of a lady to marry me, or to own my sisters as connections. I only said if I were going to marry, I would want Miss Case. As she would not have me, I shall never marry any one."

"Be all this as it may, let me hear of no more intimacy with Miss Case. I desire you to keep up an acquaintance with Miss Seymour, and to carry on your law studies as you intimate you intend doing."

Understanding that the interview was over, Albert left the room. As he passed out, he noticed a peculiar smile on his father's face that seemed to say, "I am quite sure of the outcome of my plans." Albert was not so sure.

And yet there had been a time in that father's life when he was a different man. Those who had known Mr. Cooper in his earlier years, said that he was then both warm hearted and generous. But as he became more and more absorbed in business he became more hardened, all generous impulses were smothered, and he became known as a sharp dealer, unscrupulous as to the means he employed, so long as he was the gainer. His home life, where self-interest alone was considered, had helped to make him what he was.

CHAPTER XV.

Aug.—, 18—.—

This afternoon a Sunday-school picnic was held in the grounds of Sunset Park, which proved to be a most enjoyable affair. Of course, all the children were there, and also the young people of the village and surrounding country, many of whom are much better informed on general topics than I had expected to find them. They have their literary and reading circles, and a number of them have attended some seminary or college, so that they are acquainted with the usages of good society. Their parents are sober, sensible, well read men and women, who greeted each other heartily. While the people were gathering they gravely discussed the weather, crops, house-keeping, politics and religion.

When the exercises of singing, prayer and speaking were over, luncheon was arranged on a long table. As the picnic was for the children, they were placed at the table first, and served by the older people, who enjoyed their refreshment later while the children continued their interrupted games.

After dinner the older people visited, while those younger amused themselves in various ways. Early in the afternoon, a young lady, Miss Ida Close, invited me to join a committee which had been ordered to complete the arrangement of a programme for an all-day temperance meeting, in which

all the Sunday-schools, literary and temperance societies were to join, and which was to be held a few weeks later.

Miss Close introduced me to half a dozen young people, and we seated ourselves on the grass under a shady tree. After they had arranged their programme, we were joined by several others. In the course of conversation, a number of church-members were mentioned, who rarely contributed to the support of the various church interests.

"How is that?" I inquired. "I supposed that when people joined the church, they promised to give of their means for its support. Is it honest, then, for them not to do so? How would we regard people who thus failed to keep their promises in business matters? Is it not much more serious to break one's promise to God and the church?"

"That is all very well for you," rejoined Jennie Miller. "I suppose it is very easy for you to give of your means when you have so much, and will never miss it; but it is quite different with me. In the first place I have no means, for my father supports me. In the second place, my father's salary as village postmaster is so small that it takes every cent of it to keep our large family."

"I do not believe," said Emma Johnston, "there is a church-member over twelve years old, who is well, but might contribute something,—at least only in very exceptional cases. Why do you not earn some money?"

"How?"

"I have joined the missionary society," said Miss Close, "and cannot get a cent to pay my dues unless

I earn it; as my father is a blacksmith, we do not get rich very fast. So, in the spring I set a hen on thirteen eggs, and she hatched ten chickens. Father lent me money to buy the hen and eggs and to pay for grain to feed them until they are big enough to sell, when I must pay him back. Whatever I have left over and above expenses I shall give to the missionary society. It will not be much, but at least I shall have tried to do something."

"Well," said Miss Susy Leonard, "I made a dress for Miss Goodrich and earned three dollars, which I paid towards church expenses. It was very little, —but better than nothing."

"And yours," I added, "was a real gift, one that has cost you something. That is what troubles me. I have not the satisfaction of working for what I give, nor the privilege of being obliged to deny myself anything in order to be able to give. It must be a real pleasure to give what has cost one something."

"But you too can sew?"

"Yes, but that, you know, would not be a real benevolence for one in my position; it would be taking employment from dressmakers who need the work. Were I to raise chickens, the principle would be the same. In the case of Miss Close and Miss Leonard, theirs is a real benevolence, which adds to the benevolence treasury; while in my case, nothing would be gained beyond the gratification of a sentiment, and possibly harm might be done."

"I never saw it in that light before. Thank you for helping us to realize our privileges," replied Miss Close.

"I tell you," cried Ella Smith, who is not a Christian, "if I were rich like you, I'd not raise chickens, nor sew, nor bother myself about anything! I'd buy a new dress every day and build a house an acre square. Oh, I'd have a good time!"

"But that is not all that money is given us for, and we are accountable for the use we make of it. Besides, I would rather make people happy and have many friends, than have all the dresses in the world."

"But do you not think," asked Harry Day, "that it helps poor working people when rich people spend their money in clothing, fine houses and expensive living generally? Is it not better to provide work for people so they can earn their own living, than to let them become paupers to whom we must give alms?"

"That is a question I do not yet fully understand. But in my own case, I feel that the thing I can do now is to help those who can not work. When I learn what more I can do to assist people to help themselves, and thus raise the moral standard of people generally, I shall be glad to do it.

"Of one thing, however, I am certain. If rich people would give generously and systematically for the maintenance of the church and its interests, and also for the relief of the destitute, at the same time study to effect a change in the conditions that cause all this poverty and trouble, even if it lessened their immense business profits,—the sum of the suffering in the world would be reduced.

"From what I can learn, few rich people are doing any of these things. Therefore, so long as the present state of affairs continues, and there are so

many helpless poor, I shall try to do as much good as I can in the best way I know."

"If you wait for your fine dresses until all the poor people are made comfortable, you will never have them," demurred Ella Smith.

"That does not trouble me. If I can only do something helpful, as well as give what I shall not miss, I shall be satisfied."

A stranger who had joined us a few minutes previously, followed with:—

"I hope, for one thing, that you will avoid what seems to be a growing tendency on the part of rich people. For instance, sometimes when a president of a great corporation, or a rich manufacturer, gives a sum of sufficient amount to be published in the newspapers, he immediately increases the price of the product he controls, thus taking the amount of his gift from the consumer; or else he lowers the wages of his employes enough to refund the amount given. In either case he takes to himself credit for his generosity."

"I do not understand how one can conscientiously do such a thing."

"Conscience has nothing to do with it. The man simply wants to pose as a philanthropist, and at the same time advertise himself and his business without any expense to himself. In the near future this will become so common, that public disgust will compel them to cease that sort of advertising," and the stranger moved away.

"There are great problems in the business world," said Harold Day. "The cry is that the rich are growing richer and the poor are growing poorer;

—that capital is arrayed against labor, and the plea of the employes is not for alms, but for wages at living rates. It is the duty of all classes, rich and poor, to study these matters, not from standpoints of self-interest, but with a view to better all mankind."

"We are learning too," said Jennie Miller, "that poor people are not the only ones who are puzzled as to how they shall manage their business affairs."

"It seems to me, Miss Seymour," added Mr. Norton, "that if you consider yourself as simply the Lord's steward over your fortune, conducting your business and using your money as you think Christ Himself would do, it will require your best mental powers and occupy all your time. In that case you would be spending your whole life in direct and most active work for the Master."

"Thank you for that suggestion. It accords with a sermon I heard in New York, in which the clergyman said that it is possible to glorify God in the conduct of business. However, I do not quite see what I can do in that way; but if I 'do all for Jesus,' —then attending to rents and contracts is service rendered to Christ. This opens to me a wide door. But you see, I do not know just how to begin, nor what is the right course for me to pursue. There is so much to do. In the first place, I need to supplement my education by doing a great deal of systematic reading; besides this it will take a long time to understand my business affairs so I can conduct them in such a way as will most benefit the largest number of people. And then they tell me I owe a duty to society. What I have heard, seen and read,

has aroused my curiosity to see what fashionable life is like, and to learn my duty in that direction. Most of all, I am unsettled about some religious matters; people have such different ideas of what God requires of us; it seems as though it would take a lifetime to understand the Bible and know just what is right."

Oscar Jones remarked: "Truly, if one looks at it in the right way, yours is a formidable undertaking, and being rich means a great deal more than having plenty of money to spend on having a good time."

"I find it so, and since I have so vague an idea of what my duties are, I am glad whenever I hear anything in this connection definitely explained, as Mr. Norton has done."

I then spoke of the sermon I had heard in New York on the subject of Christian giving. Oscar Jones asked in great surprise:

"Do you mean to say, Miss Seymour, that the minister thought people ought to give a tenth of their income towards the support of the church?"

"Yes, towards the support of the church and its interests,—and he proved it from the Bible."

"Some people prove a great deal from the Bible. I do not believe it is our duty to give more than we can afford."

"Do you not think we can always afford what the Lord requires?" inquired Mr. Norton.

"But I do not believe that, under the New Testament dispensation, we are required to give one tenth of our income."

"But," continued Mr. Norton, "what is the ground of your belief? I often hear people say,

'This is right and that is wrong,' or 'I believe this or that,' as if that settled the matter for all time and for everybody. Now, on a question of this sort, ought we not to look for higher authority than simply our own belief or feeling?

"I think, Mr. Jones, the best way to satisfy yourself on this point, will be to study the subject in the Old and New Testaments, finding how far they agree, and corroborate each other, in the matter of keeping the moral law and living holy lives."

"That is a large undertaking."

"True, but he who resolves to follow the teachings of Christ has a large undertaking on hand, and to succeed he must put forth his best effort, humbly depending on his Savior for help. In dealing with such important matters as deciding what Christ teaches concerning our duty, it does not seem consistent with Christian faithfulness to excuse ourselves by simply saying, 'I do not believe Christ teaches this,' insead of ascertaining the truth at any cost."

"I stand reproved, and will study the subject as you suggest; if I find this to be the teaching of Christ, I'll follow it."

"But," asked Mr. Day, "was not paying tithes a Mosaic and ritualistic law? Are we bound by that law now?"

"It was not a part of the ceremonial law, but of the moral law. That you must admit is still binding."

"Yes," said I, "in the sermon to which I referred, the minister read from the Bible, proving that Abraham paid tithes hundreds of years before the

ceremonial law was given. Jacob also paid tithes. Twenty years before God gave the law providing that the Levites should be supported from these tithes, He said to Moses, 'The tithe is the Lord's;' and this was long before the ritual was given. Moreover, history teaches us that the early church taught the duty of paying tithes."

"Well, you have greatly interested me in the subject, and I shall certainly study it thoroughly.

"For the present let us suppose this a duty. In the first place, I do not see how a farmer is going to know how much is a tenth of his income; in the second place, I do not see how a farmer can afford to pay one tenth of his income. He makes so little from year to year."

"I am now teaching," explained Mr. Norton, "so at present, tithing my income is a very simple matter. I have only to deduct one tenth from my salary as I receive it from month to month. But when on the farm, I found that if during the year a farmer keeps a careful account of all business outlays, and deducts the same from his entire income, a tenth of the remainder is the Bible requirement."

"But what do you call business outlays? Would you include living expenses?"

"I do not see that a farmer should deduct his living expenses from his income, any more than I should deduct mine from my salary."

"But most farmers board their hired men, and because of this, also have the expense of hired help in the house. How would you arrange that?"

"That is not a difficult problem. The farmer must keep an account of the amount and value of

supplies used; then by calculating the cost of board per capita, he can find the outlay for hired help."

"That," objected Mr. Day, "is more trouble than most farmers will take the time to attend to."

"It is just what every farmer must do if he achieve the highest possible success with his business. I have no doubt that farmers would be many dollars richer every year, if they would thus undertake to tithe their income, for they would thus conduct their affairs in a more business-like manner. Laying duty aside, it would be the most profitable way to farm.'

"That is a new way of looking at it."

"Yes," said Lois Reed, a Sunday-school teacher, "that is always the way with the Lord's commands. 'In keeping of them is great reward;' spiritually and temporally. To be sure, it is a poor Christian who would keep them only for the sake of temporal gain; but if he had no higher motive, he would have his reward."

"Do you think the rule would hold good in all departments of business?"

"Certainly, whatever leads a man to make more careful, conscientious business calculations must help him to be a wise business man."

"But generally the one who drives the sharpest bargains, and looks out for number one, is the man who makes the most money," said Oscar Jones.

"I thought," interrupted Jennie Miller, "we were talking about the best way for Christian people to conduct business. I hope we are not to compare ourselves with rogues and dishonest men. Of course, we cannot compete with men who improve their

opportunities to steal thousands of dollars, directly or indirectly; though, even in their case, the sequel usually proves that 'The way of the transgressor is hard.' "

"From your remarks, Miss Seymour," said Mr. Norton, "I judge you are convinced of the Christian's obligation to pay one tenth of his income."

"Yes, and as soon as I can find out what one tenth of my income is, I shall gladly obey the law."

"It seems to me that Miss Close and Miss Leonard, instead of only giving one tenth, have given all their income. What more could be required? Of course, when we hear of the great need in the world, we long to give more; but as a simple matter of keeping God's commandments, they have abounded in good works, since the tenth is what we owe, and all more than that comes under the head of a 'free will offering,' " was Mr. Nortons' reply.

"This opens another door for me," said I, "for since I need not restrict myself to simply paying one tenth, it is my privilege to abound in good works by giving, as a 'free will offering,' as much as will not interfere with my regular income and thus prevent a continuance of such gifts."

"I have often thought," returned Mr. Norton, "that since a tenth is what is required of all Christians, rich people who are disposed to carry out the spirit, as well as the letter of the law, would want to give many times one tenth."

At this point we were called to the stand to assist with some music, so the discussion closed.

"The people do not seem to hold themselves so

aloof from me as they did at the picnic last Fourth of July," I remarked to Ida Close, to which she replied:

"Why, don't you understand that? How did we know but that you would repel our advances? When the Clayton family and their friends came to spend a few weeks at Sunset Park in the summer, they ignored all the people here. Sometimes they came to our picnics, and walked about, looking curiously at us and our arrangements, often seeming much amused at our expense. Of course we never approached them socially or in any other way."

I find I am not so timid about talking to people as I was a few months ago. When I realized how large a part I had taken in that discussion I was quite amazed.

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Sept. —, 18—.—

I believe I am a Christian. I know I have given myself to the Lord, and since I belong to Him I must be saved. I am sure He will lead me on to become more and more like Himself, and to be like Jesus is the chief desire of my heart. How wonderfully life opens out before me! The more I learn the more I see of life's privileges; but I also find an increasing number of problems. The question of amusements is still before me, and I am unable to understand why dancing, theaters, and many of these things are wrong. Those who object to them have given me no satisfactory reason for doing so. Most of their arguments, when brought down to the last analysis, are about the

same as that of an elderly gentleman whom I heard speaking against dancing. Some one asked him why he objected to this particular amusement, and he answered:

"I despise it and I always did."

"But why?"

"I don't know, but I despise it."

This argument does not impress me as conclusive. I have heard others say that a deeply spiritual Christian is never found in the ball room; that participation in such amusements dims their religious experience and lessens their joy. But I do not understand why this should be so. Esther does not object to dancing, and I am sure she is an earnest, consistent Christian. I have prayed for light, but see no way to decide for myself unless I have some personal experience in the matter. To be sure, Mrs. Rodgers says that I will understand many things more clearly when I am older; but that does not help me now, unless I simply follow the advice of those who condemn such amusements, or follow the example of those who approve of them. In either case I find myself in a dilemma; on the one hand, Mrs. Rodgers, and others, whose judgment seems good, disapprove of balls; on the other hand my mother and grandmother had no objection to them; neither have Esther and Mrs. Howard. It does seem to me that young people are capable of understanding more than older people give them credit for, and that it would be much better to explain things in general, in such a way that one could see the reasons for their objections. After much reflection, I have about decided to allow Mrs.

Howard to make what she may consider suitable arrangements for me to spend a part of the winter in the city, that I may see something of fashionable life.

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CHAPTER XVI.

Sept. —, 18—. —

Just as I had come to the above mentioned conclusion, Miss Ida Close came over to see if I would not attend the union temperance meeting, for which the final arrangements were made last week at the picnic. So, yesterday, we went with a large delegation by train to E——; where we were met by committees, and sent in carriages out to the grove where the meeting was held. All the meetings were good, but I was especially interested in the speech of Mr. Granby, a congressman from Massachusetts. He is a man of striking appearance, tall, broad shouldered, standing so erect that he looks even taller than he is; he has a high, broad forehead, large, intensely black eyes and dark, slightly curling hair. He seems to be a natural orator, having a fine gift of language, and a voice of remarkable melody, power and effect. Mr. Granby is very earnest as well as original, and most people pronounce his ideas extreme. However, they are not likely to forget his address, in which he handled his subject in a masterly manner. His hearers may object to his arguments, but they cannot combat them. His interesting style and fine bearing make him a very attractive speaker.

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Last evening, as a number of us were standing together, discussing the events of the day, Mr Granby and Mr. Day joined our group. Mr. Gran-

by quietly and easily turned the conversation, which was general, so that each one seemed, incidentally, to make some remark about the temperance sentiment of the people where he resided, and in the same way, before he left, each had expressed his or her personal views, except myself. Finally, Mr. Granby turned to me, saying:

"And where is your home?"

"At Hampton."

"Oh, you and Mr. Day are from the same place. Are you forming any new plans for interesting the people there?"

"I am a stranger at Hampton, having been there only since last June. I hardly know what needs to be done or what should be my part in it."

"Oh, well, you will find plenty to do. I notice you sing well; that is always a help," and with that he passed on.

Later in the evening we gathered about the organ at the stand. Mr. Granby has a reputation as a soloist as well as an orator, and in response to an invitation to sing, he asked if I would accompany him, which I did. His rich, wonderful voice rang out upon the air like a clarion call, seeming to summon all the world to great and noble action. As his tones vibrated upon the air, one seemed to hear the marshaling of mighty hosts of crusaders, ready to march upon every rampart of evil, confident of victory and exulting in the foreseen triumph. There is such power, such an influence in music and song! I never so realized it before,—I begin to understand what people mean when they talk of a consecrated voice.

This morning, as I sat in front of the tent, Mr. Granby approached, lifted his hat, and said:

"Miss Seymour, yesterday you seemed doubtful as to what you could do to help interest others in this cause. I understand you have great possessions in money and property; that means great power for good."

I then told him something of my desires and perplexities.

"Yes," he replied, "undoubtedly, there are many problems connected with making the right use of money. If I had it I would try to use it conscientiously. As it is, I am glad to be free to use all the time and strength at my disposal, in direct personal effort towards bringing about what seems to be greatly needed in the way of reforms."

I then told him of how my time had thus far been taken up, and of my efforts to understand my duties in various directions, including the question of my duties and privileges in matters of benevolence; and that as yet I saw no prospect of bringing order out of the chaos.

"And yesterday," said I, "you brought more problems to be solved."

Referring to my being so fully occupied in attending to business matters, and in considering my relations and duties to those with whom I deal and those whom I employ, I expressed regret that, individually, I could take so little part in the hand to hand work in which Mr. Day and others were so busily engaged.

"At the most," said I, "I only can assist indirectly."

"I think I understand you, and while others are probably envying you what appears to them your great opportunities for doing good, I offer you my sympathy because of the opportunities denied you.

"There are also other difficulties in your way besides those you mention. There are many suffering and destitute people who have not learned that there is a cause for their troubles, as well as for everything else; that frequently they are themselves to blame for what they suffer; and that God is working out great plans of which we, with our finite conceptions, can have little comprehension. They naturally look with more or less suspicion upon all who, as they think, are so much more highly favored than themselves. Often they feel much bitterness towards the rich who are indifferent to the needs of those less fortunate than themselves; and they fail to distinguish between them, and those who sympathize with them in their distress and are seeking to help them.

"Then too, it does seem as if the workers are mostly those who have nothing but themselves to give. Consequently, many of those whom they go to help, regard the good work of the city missionary as simply an employment,—and people whose own hearts are untouched by the love of Christ, are often perverse enough to refuse to understand that those who undertake this work must be supported, or they would be unable to do it. I have often thought of how much good it would do if rich people, who do not need support, would themselves engage more frequently in personal work,

instead of contenting themselves with giving their money.''

''But what can I do?''

''Please allow me to mention something you can avoid doing. I was once present when a rich woman gave one dollar to a charitable cause, saying, 'This is a widow's mite.' The gentleman who was advocating the cause, turned sharply upon her with,—

'' 'A widow's mite! Madam, do you know what that means? It means every dollar you have, even your living!'

''Really, Miss Seymour, I have heard rich people talk in that strain until I am disgusted.

''I knew another rich woman who said, 'Since I supply the money to carry out such a scheme, I expect to be excused from all further effort in the matter.' ''

''Yes,'' I returned, ''I have studied the Bible on this subject, and think I understand it.''

''Then you have read the command, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might,' which throws some light upon the problem as to what you can do. You will find much to do in Hampton. I suppose, too, you expect to spend some time in New York?''

''Yes, I have decided to spend a few months there next winter.''

''I also expect to be there occasionally during December and January. If you will let me know of your arrival, I shall be glad to assist you in finding out what personal work you can do there. But I anticipate that your city friends will object to your thinking of anything outside of society matters.''

"I am going to the city with the express purpose of ascertaining what duties I owe to society. I shall be all the better prepared to judge of this if I can discover the relation of society to the needs of the world. Therefore, your kind offer, for which I sincerely thank you, is in line with my plans."

"Well, I shall be glad to meet you and to be of any service to you there, if your friends do not find a way to upset your plans."

"No, since this is a part of my purpose in visiting the city, I shall certainly carry it out."

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Oct. —, 18—.—

One week ago yesterday I reached the large, home-like residence of Judge Harris, which is in the suburb of A——. Judge Harris is a dignified but cordial gentleman, and his wife is a sweet, motherly woman. They have three sons, May being their only daughter. Since she was converted at camp-meeting, the entire family are now Christians.

At Sunset Park I am accustomed to reading from the Prayer Book mornings, but I was never in a house before where family worship was conducted as it is there. After breakfast the household gathers in the parlor, each member bringing a Bible and hymn book. Judge Harris announces a hymn, which all join in singing, May playing the organ; then a chapter from the Bible is read a verse about; and Judge Harris offers prayer, in which he prays for each one present. In the evening, before retiring, a verse is sung, and the Judge calls on

some one, his wife, one of his sons, perhaps May, or one of the servants, to pray.

This seems to me a most beautiful custom and has helped me so much. Throughout the day the influence of these simple services seemed to go with me, constantly reminding me of God's presence in this home, which is truly His temple. When I told Mrs. Rodgers about it, she said that in her home this custom existed, and I have decided that it will be helpful to have the same at Sunset.

May's brother Jack, who is three years older than herself, and Sam and Rob, who are younger, are intelligent, jolly boys, very gentlemanly,—not awkward and ill at ease, like poor Albert Cooper. Yet I cannot help wishing he were there for a while; I am sure it would do him a great deal of good.

I was greatly surprised to find Miss Isabelle Granby at the Harrises'. Although I liked her very much, I had little opportunity to make her acquaintance, as her brother came for her on Thursday, spending the day there and leaving in the evening. May met Miss Isabelle at boarding school. They form a great contrast in appearance, May being small and slight, with blue eyes, fair complexion and light hair; while Miss Isabelle, like her brother, is tall and dark, with refined features and expressive, large dark eyes. I am just a little afraid of her, although she is very friendly, good natured and full of fun. She is very dignified, wise, and so well informed, that while Judge Harris and others talked of many things of which I had never heard, Miss Isabelle seemed to know all about whatever

was discussed. May says she was the brightest girl in school, and that the teachers were very proud of her.

Mr. Granby, senior, is a well educated New England farmer, who comes of a good family. After he was graduated from college his health failed, and having inherited the old homestead which had belonged to three generations of well educated Granbys, he became a farmer. Mrs. Granby was the daughter of an Amherst professor. Isabelle has a sister, Alice, who is married to a Cincinnati physician, whom May describes as the sweetest, tiniest lady she ever saw,—beautiful as a blue-eyed fairy,—good as an angel, and as wise as her mother. May does go on so! But I gather that this Alice is well worth seeing and knowing. There is also a gentle, brown-eyed brother Ernest, who, when he was two years old, had a fall which injured his spine and crippled him for life. When Isabelle mentions him, her eyes grow large and luminous, as if she feels so much more than even her tongue can express. When Mr. Granby speaks of Ernest his face and voice express unmeasured affection. It must be wonderful to be loved as these two love their brother.

Mr. Howard Granby, after going through college, took an extensive law course, and is now noted in his profession. Judge Harris seems to attach much importance to his opinions. Mr. Granby has served a term in his state legislature, and is now a Representative in the Congress of the United States. He is also in demand as a lecturer, and has done effective service in the temperance work.

Although Mr. Granby is so wise and famous, I am not in the least afraid of him. He is graver than his sister and even more dignified; yet I find it easy to express my thoughts in his presence, and do not shrink from letting him know how ignorant I am.

The afternoon the Granbys were at Judge Harris', a number of people were in the drawing-room, and in reply to some remark, a young lady rather flippantly exclaimed:

"Well, I see no harm in dancing,—at last for people who are not Christians."

"And why," said another, "is it wrong for Christians to do anything that it is not wrong for you to do? All people are commanded to obey the Lord. When you, or Christians, fail to do this, in either case it is disobedience, and disobedience to God is sin in one, as much as in the other. I do not speak of dancing especially, but of anything that is wrong."

Then followed a discussion, the conclusion of which was that wrong is wrong, no matter by whom committed. In this connection it was also brought out that we are not only responsible for what we do know, but for what we ought to know. An elderly gentleman asked me if I thought it wrong to dance.

"I have not yet been able," I returned "to determine the question for myself, and cannot judge for others."

"Do you not consider it safe to accept the opinions of mature Christians? May seems satisfied that her mother's judgment in such matters is to be relied upon. Would it not be well to follow May's example?"

"If I had a mother like May's, in matters where it

was merely a question of indulging in some amusement, I would certainly respect her opinions and accede to her wishes whether I saw a reason for it or not, so long as no principle was involved. That would be not only safe, but right. My mother died before I was ten years old. However, if I followed May's example, I should decide that it is not wrong to dance, for my mother did not disapprove of it, and she was a Christian. As it is, so many good people differ in opinion on this subject, that situated as I am, I see no way for me but to think the matter out for myself."

A discussion of Puritan conduct followed, in the course of which Mr. Granby read as follows from a book he held in his hand:

"'New England never made provision for amusements. Amusements have for ages, in Europe, been the bribe which government threw to the people for their political rights. Fiddles were cheaper than ballot boxes. Kings, formerly, would pay liberally to amuse, but nothing to instruct. The old Puritan, regarding games and amusements as poisonous flowers, whose odor bewitched the senses and stupefied manhood, abhorred them. It was not hatred of pleasure, but of the seductive purposes to which it had been seductively put.

"'It was the practical philosophy of New England that a free and intelligent people, thrifty in business, managing their own matters, and zealously occupied in building up the common wealth, had excitement enough, and variety of interest in their normal affairs, and that earnest men did not need,

like children, to be fed on frolic and amusement.' '' —(Norwood, Beecher.)

"In what follows," remarked Mr. Granby, "the author, in expressing his own views, somewhat modifies what I have just read, but to my mind, these words, without qualifications, express the truth.

"If we distinguish between helpful and harmful pleasure by considering the results of amusements pursued for the sake of pleasure, we shall not often have occasion to regret indulgence in that which is blameworthy. To do this, we must sometimes look deeper than simply to observe the tendency and result of what has gone on around us, during our own short lifetime, although very often we may, if we will, learn much from this. We must consider the uses to which an amusement has been easily adapted through many generations, and the result of the same, if we would determine the general tendency of its influence.

"If we thus study dancing and the amusements usually associated with it, as we now see them, and as given in European history, how often shall we find the ball an occasion of intrigue, conspiracy and other wrong-doing! For a very striking example of this we may turn to the massacre of St. Bartholomew's night. How often, too, have dancing, gambling and drinking been the direct occasion of the overthrow of good causes in both peace and war!''

This seemed to me like real argument against dancing; real reason,—not simply feeling,—on the subject, or doing a thing because some one else does it.

CHAPTER XVII.

Oct. —, 18—. —

To-day I received an unexpected visit from Mr. Albert Cooper. He informed me that he stopped off at the village where Miss Case teaches, and called on her. When I told Mrs. Rodgers of this she replied:

"I am not in the least surprised; moreover, if I am not much mistaken, Miss Case will prove to be not wholly indifferent to Mr. Cooper."

"Oh, Mrs. Rodgers, that is impossible!"

"My dear, I am of the opinion that some day Mr. Cooper will astonish his friends. Natures like his awaken slowly, but he is capable of a great deal more than is manifest at present. Indeed, I rather like the young man, and think when his latent powers are developed he will prove a strong character. I am inclined to believe he will prove the sort of man who will form just the balance such a quick, active, nervous person as Miss Case will need to keep her from going to extremes. Just give the young man time to develop, and Miss Case time to understand and appreciate him, and you will see."

I was dumb with astonishment and perhaps some indignation,—not indignant with Mrs. Rodgers,—but with the idea that such a thing as she suggested might even be possible, and after a few minutes came to my room to relieve myself by writing in my journal.

Oct. —, 18—.—

Mr. Cooper has been over twice, and I have been trying to look at him through Mrs. Rodgers' eyes. I knew, at the end of his first visit that he was struggling with new ideas of manliness, and rejoiced that mine had been the opportunity to show him some of the better possibilities of life. I hoped that in consequence of this he would be a better man than his father; I thought him a very commonplace youth, who would probably spend his life making and taking care of money; he seemed to have very few ideas and to have been taught very few of the amenities of society, or to have been a very inapt pupil. On his two last visits I have studied him closely, and observe in him an earnestness that was not noticeable the first time I met him. This morning he told me that he intended to undertake a course of reading outside his law studies, and inquired what books would be best for him to begin with.

A few days ago I received a letter from Miss Case, a part of which I shall now copy into my journal.

"Brownsville, October 9th, 18—.

"My dear Miss Seymour:— * * *

By the way, last evening, to my surprise, Mr. Cooper called again. * * * * * * * * He said he was going to H——. He surely seems a diamond in the rough. Although his appearance is not prepossessing, yet the frankness with which he expressed his regret at having acquired so little knowledge, with his blunt, but pathetic appeal to be 'told how a fellow was going

to set about being a man,' quite moved me. I wonder if you and I cannot form a conspiracy to help him on a little. As the work of a public benefactor is more in your line than mine, you will probably have to do most of the helping; but you may depend on me to do what I can. How would it be if you could contrive to smuggle him into the society of Judge Harris' family? They would understand him so well, and would heartily sympathize with him in his new ambitions.

* * * * * * *

"This finishes all the news I have to tell you, so I will close.

"Yours, with much love,

"MARGARET CASE.'

There now! I suppose Mrs. Rodgers will say, "I told you so;" but I will draw no hasty conclusions, and as far as I am able, will help Miss Case. If Mr. Cooper is a "diamond in the rough," I shall consider it a privilege to help polish him. If he is to be anything to Miss Case I am especially anxious to do this; in any case, if he does not marry her he will probably marry some other woman, and if I can help to get him ready to make her happy I ought to do it. Life seems to be made up of many queer things of which I never dreamed.

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Oct. —, 18—. —

I am arranging for an old-fashioned Thanksgiving at Sunset Park, to which the Harrises have promised to come; so I also invited Mr. Cooper. He seemed overwhelmingly delighted and

immediately asked if Miss Case would be here, too. I was happy to be able to assure him that I expected her, as well as several other young ladies. Besides Nellie Millburn and two of our friends, I had asked May Harris to bring three or four of her own and her brother's friends.

Well, I'll have nothing to do with this prospective love affair; I am not even going to believe in its possibility,—and Margaret Case shall not have the remotest hint that such a thing has been thought of. I wish Mrs. Rodgers had not put it into my mind. If May Harris should get an inkling of it there would be no peace for any one, she is such a tease. She even managed to extract considerable fun out of an imaginary preference for me, on the part of Mr. Granby. If a real case were on hand, I would beg to be spared May's artillery.

I shall proceed on the principle that I ought to help every one to the extent of my ability, in just the way they most need help; if money is needed I will give that; if my influence can be used to lead any one to a better course, I will give that; if I have had more favorable advantages, thereby obtaining superior knowledge, and feel that my advice or instruction is needed, it shall be freely given.

I have heard Judge Harris say that if young ladies were thoughtful and desired to do good, there was a wide field of usefulness for them in the way of influencing young men aright. He thinks many young men could have been saved from ruin, if young ladies had taken the trouble to make them understand that a continuation in objectionable conduct would forfeit the respect of their lady friends.

Now, if I can arouse in Albert Cooper an ambition to be manly, and can throw around him the influence of such people as the Harrises, surely I shall have done a good work. One thing, however, troubles me; he does not seem to have any religious tendencies. He listens respectfully when I speak of these things, but makes no response. Perhaps Miss Case will be more successful in awakening him to the advantages of a Christian life.

Oct. —, 18—.—

I have told Mrs. Rodgers about my failure to interest Mr. Cooper religiously. She answered:

"You are in too great a hurry to see the results of your efforts. Your are comparing this young man with the young people from Christian homes, whom you met at camp-meeting. But this boy has evidently had no earnest Christian acquaintances. In coming here he entered, as it were, a new world.

"I have had little talks with Mr. Cooper, and think I understand something of his home life and past history. You are the first young lady who ever treated him as if he were not more of an annoyance than anything else. This, with a knowledge of your wealth and independent position, impressed him favorably; your readiness to explain things led him to listen willingly; your ideas, to him startlingly new, pleased his impressionable nature.

"You will find he has considerable selfishness. As yet, he has cared only for boyish sports; beyond the sarcasms and ridicule of his sisters, he has, hitherto, encountered little opposition or hindrance in indulging his tastes. Besides causing him to regard them

with contempt and dislike, the conduct of his sisters has affected him but little. Consequently, he has had few experiences that incline him to deceit, and he has come to regard any sort of effort to keep up a good appearance as a great trouble; therefore he prefers to take a very direct course in speech and action.

"Your straightforward business dealing, while it struck him as very unusual, impressed him as the easiest, and consequently as the most desirable way to avoid inconvenience. Then, too, he admired and stood somewhat in awe of you, and was not insensible to the nobility of such a life as all this opened up before him. Thus he reached the first decisive moment of his life, and has turned his attention in a new direction. Having been moved, he is simply following an impulse in the right direction. His selfishness is really helping him at this point, for he wants to stand on a level with you and Miss Case, and feels, rather than thinks, that he must take a certain course to accomplish this. The course happens to be an upward one; so you and Miss Case, if you desire it, and are judicious, have an opportunity which only you two young ladies can use successfully."

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Nov. —, 18—. —

Social opportunities! This continues to be a vague term to me. Mrs. Howard, Esther, Mrs. Rodgers, Mr. Granby and even Mr. Markham, have all referred to these responsibilities, and each one seems to have a different view of these

duties. I have also talked with Mr. and Mrs. Brooks, who hold still other views.

During the past few months my studies and other duties have claimed my attention. I have also done what I could for the improvement and happiness of the young people in the vicinity. The house, the library and the grounds have been open to them. They seem to appreciate my interest in them, and my efforts to share with them my privileges and advantages. In turn, I have derived great benefit from this association, for these young people are surprisingly bright and intelligent.

After long reflection I have decided to write a letter to Esther, of which the following is a copy:

Sunset Park, Nov. 1st, 18—.

Dear Esther:—The trees are stripped of their beautiful autumn leaves of crimson and gold; the bright, sunshiny days are gone, and the doors and windows are closed.

Outside it is dark and cold; "it rains and the wind is never weary." No more delightful walks in the woods, nor drives through ever varying country scenery. When the snow comes the bare trees, homely farm fences and black stubble fields may take on new beauty, but at present the eye rests on nothing cheerful or interesting.

But come away from the window, and sit down with me in my inviting green library. The bright fire in the grate is throwing a warm, rosy light over the handsomely bound books in their artistic cases, and on the pictures on the wall. All is as cozy and homelike as can be; only one thing is lacking, namely, your presence. So, come and talk with me.

For the last hour I have been in a brown study, and I am going to tell you all about it. You know I have been studying, but you do not know how hard. I never put in more busy hours at Fledding than I have since coming to Sunset Park. Several times Mrs. Rodgers has become alarmed and insisted upon less work and more recreation. Nearly every week, by urging upon me some duty to the young people in the vicinity, has she beguiled me into attending neighborhood entertainments and giving dinner parties; or sometimes suggesting how pleasant it would be to have some young lady visit me for two or three days; perhaps she would remember that we ought to return visits and calls. When all else failed, she would pretend she was very lonesome, and complain that I never sat with her to talk. She has even threatened to advertise for a young lady companion for herself, so she would have some one to help her through with her lonely days.

Mrs. Rodgers managed to have Nellie Millburn here during October, and it was made to appear that I could not very well excuse myself from daily driving her to and from the village school. However, I was delighted with the arrangement, and greatly enjoyed Miss Millburn's stay at Sunset Park. Moreover, Nellie has helped me a great deal in my studies, in which she is deeply interested.

Well, the result of all this is that I begin to feel very wise; and I cannot do much more until I make a new venture out into the world. I think the time has come when I should turn my attention to what you and others have termed my "social duties." So

I have decided it would be well for me to spend part of the winter in New York. How can it be managed? Mrs. Rodgers has been invited by the lady with whom her niece lives, to spend a month, including Christmas, with them, and I wish her to have the opportunity to do so. Therefore, I would like to go to New York about the first of December, and remain a month or so after the holidays.

I want to be an inmate of a society home, and so far as may be, a part of it, so that I may pursue my new study to the best advantage, untrammeled by the cares and responsibilities of my own home.

You asked about Mr. Cooper. There is nothing new to tell, I believe,—only that he has written Miss Case and myself each a letter, asking if we would be so kind as to correspond with "such a good-for-nothing scamp" as himself, and help him to keep up his courage to go through the drudgery of his law studies. We are going to do our best to grant his request. Hoping to hear from you soon,

I am as ever, your loving JULIA.

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Nov. —, 18—.—

A letter from Esther tells me that Mrs. Howard has secured an invitation for me to spend some time in New York with Mrs. Bristol, one of her friends By the same mail I received a most cordial letter from Mrs. Bristol, in which she says it will give her great pleasure if I will spend two months of the season with her.

I am glad that Esther approves of my going to the city; she says I have comprehended my affairs more quickly than she anticipated.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Dec. —, 18—. —

This afternoon I arrived at the palatial residence of Mrs. Bristol in New York. My desire to see something of the fashionable world is about to be gratified. So here I am with several trunks containing what seems a most generous outfit, but which, I understand, will need frequent replenishings to meet the large demands soon to be made upon it. Parsons is delighted to leave the country, and anticipates great satisfaction in giving free vent to her abilities and tastes in attiring a society young lady.

Mrs. Bristol, whom I met to-day for the first time, is a tall, fair woman, with light brown hair, and gray-blue eyes lighted with a vivacious, but ever changing expression. She received me very cordially, and expressed her delight at having what she was pleased to call a beautiful young lady to chaperon during the season, remarking that she expected to be much courted by the gentlemen, as in that way they would hope to be more favorably represented to me.

After resting a while in my room, it was time to prepare for dinner. As I viewed myself in the full length mirror I could not but notice that the blue silk evening dress in which Parsons had arrayed me, was very becoming; that the style in which it was made, with its long train, added much to the dignity of my appearance; while the pearls on my

neck and arms seemed to leave nothing to be supplied. I must confess that I enjoyed my own reflection. I wonder if I am growing vain that I am so glad to be beautiful.

On entering the brilliantly lighted drawing-room, I beheld Mrs. Bristol arrayed in a bewilderment of black silk, lace, and starlike diamonds, against which the dazzling whiteness of her shoulders, neck and arms formed a beautiful contrast. As I stood there, lost in wonder at her loveliness, she turned to me with her peculiarly fascinating smile, took my hand and introduced me to her husband, a faultlessly dressed gentleman, with so large a bank account that his mind has never been disturbed by consideration of ways and means.

When seated at dinner, Mrs. Bristol informed me that she had arranged for a quiet evening all to ourselves, that we might talk over my costume for the ball on Friday night while Mr. Bristol was present, as she relied very much on his taste in such matters. She said that unless I preferred something different, she had already decided upon white silk and lace, but was uncertain about the ornaments until she saw me. Mr. Bristol observed that nothing could be more becoming than what I wore this evening. He thought that with his wife in diamonds and me in pearls we would prove excellent foils. But Mrs. Bristol objected, saying that something special must be done to offset Miss Ogden, who, she has ascertained, is to appear in a rich, orange colored dress, with a magnificent set of diamond-mounted jets. From what I heard of Miss Ogden, I think her toilets must be unapproachable, and Mr.

Bristol says she has, as yet, outshone all rivals, and in that costume will be regal as an oriental queen.

Mrs. Bristol then told of a Miss Rimmons, who made her debut last winter in pale pink, with cloudy white lace and pink rosebuds.

"A dream of loveliness," said Mrs. Bristol, "until Miss Ogden swept into the room with her rose colored silk, trimmed with lace which gave her the appearance of having been sprinkled with genuine diamond dust. Do you recall the arrangement of her wonderful black hair and the effect of her magnificent dark eyes? Poor, dainty little Miss Rimmons faded and drooped, like a withered flower, while Miss Ogden carried all before her, remaining the triumphant queen of society and loveliness in New York."

"Well, do you think it will be hard to circumvent her?" inquired Mr. Bristol. "If our fresh blown blossom appears resting on clouds of soft white silk and lace, every other color must but enhance her loveliness. But the ornaments must be carefully considered. However, it seems to me that her abundant hair, fine eyes and delicate but natural color of lips and cheeks will be hard to eclipse."

Mrs. Bristol finally decided that with festoons and vines of delicate green leaves, and a gleam of emeralds to give brilliancy to the effect, my white silk and lace would so harmonize with Miss Ogden's orange as but to render my costume the more exquisite.

"So," she said, "instead of one belle being reduced to a fading lily and the other developed into a blazing meteor, each will add to the success of the

other. There is no use in trying to vanquish a woman of Miss Ogden's style in such an attire as she has planned for Friday evening."

"Oh," I cried, "I would be sorry indeed to spoil her dress! I am sure that could give me no pleasure. Let us both look our best."

But Mrs. Bristol only said, "Tut, tut, little one!" and declared I did not know with what I had to contend,—that Miss Ogden would spare nothing to annihilate me.

"Well," resumed Mr. Bristol, "I think your plan good, only do not have a profusion of the emeralds,—let there be just a glow of the jewels. The choice of materials and the arrangement of hair and drapery are the all-important matters now."

On returning to the drawing-room Mrs. Bristol said she had understood I was a musician, and asked me to play something for them. Going to the piano I ran my fingers over the keys of the splendid instrument and asked:

"What would you like to hear?"

"Oh, whatever you can play best," she replied.

After I had played two or three pieces, she said:

"That will do. Thank you very much. You play remarkably well."

Mrs. Bristol then desired me to select the finest piece of music I dared undertake and practice it until I could play it perfectly; she said I must also have a second selection ready, as some one would be likely to insist on hearing more of what she called my excellent performance, and assured me she would call me forward at the most propitious moment. Then, telling me that hitherto Miss

Ogden had been their prima donna, she expressed her confidence that I could easily excel her, which would at least give me a slight advantage, and this, at the beginning, Mrs. Bristol thought to be very important.

When I again protested that I would rather be good friends with Miss Ogden than to eclipse her, Mrs. Bristol cried out:

"Good friends with her! Of course you must be good friends. You must seem to admire her and to be utterly unconscious of your own attractions. Otherwise you will spoil everything. Only, you must not let her patronize you, but be friends with her in every way that will enhance your own charms."

"Will not that be treating her dishonorably?" I asked.

Again Mrs. Bristol seemed surprised, asked if I thought she would want me to do anything wrong, and said:

"I have had many years of experience in social matters and I know what is right. Trust me."

Mr. Bristol informed me that when he first met his wife she was the belle of the season; that her youth and beauty still enabled her to hold her place, and that many of the young ladies were quite jealous of her.

"This," continued Mr. Bristol, "is the first time Mrs. Bristol has undertaken to bring out a young lady and I am quite interested in her success; so you must not oppose her plans."

"No, indeed! I want this to be something unique. I am young enough to be your chum, but as a

married lady I can also be your chaperon. We shall plan to help each other; I will advance your interests as a marriageable young lady, which favor you will reciprocate by bringing around me a class of people among whom I wish to be a recognized leader. Now, I have told you a social truth, something I do not often consider necessary; but our mutual interests require a perfect understanding, and I see that this is the best course to pursue with you.

"Hitherto, as a young married lady, I have held my own, and worked my way along quietly but surely. But I have now reached a time when I can accomplish my purpose better by having on hand a beautiful young heiress like yourself, whose attractions will bring about me the young men belonging to the upper class in New York society. The young ladies of the same social standing will follow; and of course, the wise papas and mammas will hover around where the desirable young people gather. So, because of the favors I can confer, the probabilities are, that by the end of the season, I shall have accomplished my ambition to be acknowledged as a leader in our part of the social world, by those among whom I now stand as only an equal."

I tried to explain to Mrs. Bristol that while I would be glad to help her in any way I could, still I did not wish her to inconvenience herself on my account; also, that I came to the city simply to see something of society life, and because I thought I would enjoy it. I told her that I was not anxious to outshine any one, and if the people would be kind to me it was all I desired.

Mr. Bristol assured me they had every confidence in my ability to fulfill their expectations, and prophesied for me a brilliant and successful season.

They then spoke of the unusual number of young men in the city for whom the friends of society young ladies were ready to bid high. They intimated that a young lady of my position would rarely have a better opportunity to make a desirable settlement.

"These considerations are not to be ignored," concluded Mr. Bristol.

"Oh, yes, and young Lord Riverton is here too!" exclaimed Mrs. Bristol. "To be sure, he is as poor as a church mouse, but he has a title that reaches back into history. If he marries a young lady of wealth she will have an assured position."

I could have cried with vexation and shame as I disclaimed coming to New York with such schemes in my mind. I asked them to arrange as they thought best about my costume, for of course I would like to look well, and what they proposed seemed suitable; but begged them not to refer to those other matters.

As it was now late, Mrs. Bristol kissed me, and they bade me good night. I came to my room and, feeling too wide-awake to sleep, I have written up my journal.

This conversation with Mr. and Mrs. Bristol disturbs me. Of course, as Mrs. Bristol told me, this was an evening spent in confidential talk for which there may be no further opportunity; and not knowing them well, I must have somewhat misunderstood

them. It does not seem possible that they really mean I shall launch out on a systematic scheme to deceive people; to make them believe I am much pleased with them, and interested in their welfare, when really I am making every effort to circumvent them and thwart their plans,—to the end that I may profit by their misfortunes and disappointments. Yes, I must have misunderstood Mr. and Mrs. Bristol.

Mrs. Bristol would do anything to please any one, and help a friend all she could, provided the one benefited would follow in her train, acknowledging her as a leader. To say the least, she seems very ambitious. Mr. Bristol seems more interested in society matters, entertainments and amusements, than in anything else. When I get well acquainted with them I hope I shall understand them better.

Dec. —, 18—.—

Certainly I am in a new world. This morning at breakfast, Mr. and Mrs. Bristol discussed final arrangements for their ball. The main thing seems to be to excel, in artistic arrangement and grandeur of effect, all the previous affairs of the season. Mrs. Bristol frequently reminds me of how much she depends on me to make the evening a success. Once she remarked:

"You see how important it is for me to have a young lady who will be the acknowledged belle of the season."

I again tried to tell her how unequal I am to what she expects, and that she will probably be disappointed so far as I am concerned, at which she only smiled and replied:

"Look just as pretty, and be as sweet as you can, and all will be well."

After breakfast we saw the dressmaker. Mrs. Bristol charged her repeatedly to be sure to make my dress in the prettiest and most becoming style, and promised future patronage if I proved a success. The dressmaker praised my appearance, assuring Mrs. Bristol again and again that she need give herself no concern, for I should be the best dressed young lady in the room.

This evening a number of people were here to dinner. When I have been in the city at different times, staying at the hotel where I saw society people, I have wished that I was one of their number,—that I knew the topics of their conversation, and how they spent their time generally. Now my desire was gratified,—I was one of their number. The guests were Mr. and Mrs. Benson and their daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Sandford, daughter and son, besides two other young gentlemen.

Mrs. Benson wore a rich, black velvet dress; Mrs. Sandford's dress was of heavy, silver-gray silk; Miss Benson, a tall, somewhat languid young lady, with fair, rather colorless complexion, and large, dreamy brown eyes, was attired in delicate green silk with most beautiful rose pearls. She talks little, her manner indicating her acquiescence in whatever others say. Miss Sandford was dressed in pale purple, which is, I judge, her most becoming color; as, if one were quite frank, her hair is what would be called red, and her complexion is somewhat florid. But she looks well in that shade of purple; her features are well rounded and regular,

and, although below medium height, she is well formed and plump enough to redeem her from looking insignificant. She is bright, talks well, and is not in the least timid.

They talked about theaters, concerts, balls and receptions, past and prospective. Their conversation was interspersed with personal compliments, and instrumental music rendered by the young ladies. As their performances were rather ordinary, when Mrs. Bristol sent me to the piano I gave them a few simple pieces I picked up last summer.

After their guests were gone Mrs. Bristol exclaimed:

"There, that is over and quite satisfactorily!"

"Yes," rejoined Mr. Bristol, "but how tiresome!"

But Mrs. Bristol said that they were people who could not be ignored, and it was impossible to invite them to a regular dinner party.

"Miss Benson," she continued, "will probably marry that dull young Monroe, whose mother moves in the very first society."

Mrs. Bristol also said that of course Mrs. Monroe did not like the notion of her son's marrying into a family that had so recently come up from the plow and the mill. But as they have money and are accumulating more, she is making the best of it.

"So," Mrs. Bristol concluded, "if we keep up a tolerable intimacy with Miss Nellie Benson, we shall stand a chance of being very acceptable to Mrs. Clarence Monroe."

Mr. Bristol remarked that young Mr. Sandford is also likely to succeed in connecting himself with a family of high position and decreasing means, by

marrying, as he said, "that plain Miss Crawford." Mr. Bristol seemed much pleased over an invitation to take a tenting-out trip next spring, as the guest of young Mr. Sandford, and pronounced him "a jolly good fellow, who spends his money freely."

"Who else is going?" inquired Mrs. Bristol.

"Oh, a lot of upper ten fellows, you may be sure, or he would not presume to ask me. He understands that."

They then discussed their guests at length, Mrs. Bristol pronouncing Mrs. Benson "very ambitious without the least tact in concealing it!" She declared that from her manner, any one would readily see that her mother skimmed milk and washed dishes in her girlhood. It seems she made what, for her, was considered a fortunate marriage, as Mrs. Benson's father, from a small beginning, became a well-to-do real estate dealer. Mr. Benson, having engaged in the same business, has become very wealthy. Miss Nellie is their only daughter.

"She would be quite pretty," remarked Mrs. Bristol, "if she were to brighten up a little; as it is, she is the most stupidly good natured girl I ever saw."

But they consider that the Sandfords are bright enough. It seems their money comes to them as the result of lucky investments in western mines. Mrs. Sandford was described as a quiet, self-satisfied, comfortable woman.

"But," said Mr. Bristol, "her husband sees and understands everything, and their daughter is just like him. She took in the whole situation this evening, and if she ever gets the chance, will pay

you up for inviting her to 'an informal dinner, at which just a few intimate friends will be present. '''

Mrs. Bristol, however, expressed herself as having no concern about that, for, before Miss Sandford would get such "a chance" her brother will have married Miss Crawford, and she herself will have received more satisfactory attention from Mrs. Bristol.

Mr. Bristol thought she was, no doubt, correct, and said that he would leave her to manage the social ladder. He then remarked that I looked tired and as if I had not enjoyed myself.

"But," said he, "we must take the good with the bad. To-morrow night you will make up for the wearisomeness of this evening."

"Oh, indeed," I replied, "you do not understand me. I have been much interested, as well as much puzzled this evening. If you do not enjoy the company of these people, why did you invite them here? Certainly, if they knew how you felt they would not care to come."

"Don't you understand?" asked Mrs. Bristol. "Because their antecedents were outside the pale of society they have not been accepted unconditionally here; yet, on account of their unlimited wealth, as I have said, there is every prospect of their becoming connected with some of our most exclusive families. Therefore, although I cannot invite them with people of more assured position without giving offense, I want to keep in favor with them in order to benefit myself in their coming day of power. For this reason I invited them informally, as intimate friends, which cannot be considered otherwise than

as a compliment, at a time when I could not be expected to have a large party."

"But," I queried, "if they understood your motives how could they think it a compliment?"

Mrs. Bristol then explained that Mr. and Mrs. Benson and Mrs. Sandford were too stupid to understand anything about it; that they were satisfied to be simply rich and comfortable. Mr. Sandford, his son and daughter, in all probability, she thought, understood the situation and knew that while Mrs. Bristol had done the best thing for herself, she had also done the best thing possible for them. In short, they must know that the affair was one of mutual benefit.

"In my way," she said, "I lift them upward now; by and by they in their turn will reciprocate the favor."

"Yes," added Mr. Bristol, "they can at least speak of having dined at the Bristols'. But Miss Seymour will better learn these things by experience. It is very late and we have a full day to-morrow. We shall need some rest before morning."

So, bidding one another good night, we separated. On my table I found a letter from Mrs. Howard. By some oversight it was not sent up earlier. As I have been so troubled over all I have seen and heard since coming to the city, and am still too restless to sleep, I will copy it. Perhaps writing Mrs. Howard's comforting words will incline me to sleep.

Boston, Dec. 4th, 18—.

My dear Julia:—

I have been thinking about you and wondering how you are enjoying your first glimpse

of the world, about which you have been so curious. If I understand you aright, I think this letter will find you about the most astonished and mystified young lady in New York. You are so thoroughly honest and sincere yourself, that you will be much amazed at what society people consider polite and proper. Do not be too much distressed by all this. Your nature is such that you can never be other than true and frank; and it is not necessary nor right that you should be. Quietly, and without controversy, go on in your unpretending way,—being kind, and as far as possible, helpful to all, and you will have no difficulty. In time, too, you will find that many, whose words now seem to have no meaning, because only spoken to fall pleasantly on the ear,—are really kind-hearted, well intentioned people. They simply have never known any other life, and think nothing about the signification of their words. For example: Mrs. Bristol, devoted to society, does and says all sorts of insincere things, yet she rarely says or does anything really harmful to any one. True, she always tries to manage as she thinks will be most to her own advantage; still, she never does anything in a malicious spirit. Of course, you will meet those of whom this cannot be said; but the same is true of all classes of people, and is not an especial peculiarity of the society world.

On the other hand, you will, ere long, meet those who are as honest and sincere as you are,—who will be congenial and in perfect harmony with yourself. They, however, do not usually devote themselves so exclusively to society as does Mrs. Bristol. We

might say that while they are in society they are not of it.

I said nothing of all this before you went to New York, because I thought you would understand me better if I waited until you had a little experience in your new life.

Please remember that I am your friend, and also, that since I arranged for your introduction into society, I consider that you have a claim on me whenever you may wish for information or advice that I am able to give. Yours with love,

CORDELIA HOWARD.

CHAPTER XIX.

Dec. —, 18—.—

After my first night of indulgence in fashionable amusements, I have been very dull all day, but feel more wide-awake this evening.

I have been to a ball, a very fashionable ball. As a result am I any better satisfied with life? Am I any clearer in my convictions of duty? Perhaps I have not had time to study all the phases of these questions in the light of last night's experience. However that may be, I find myself somewhat confused by the multitudinous and varied impressions I received. May it not be well to review them?

When I saw my reflection in the long mirror in my dressing-room, I felt that surely I had no cause for dissatisfaction! As Mrs. Bristol has since said, the dressmaker's art and Parsons' skill had omitted nothing that could enhance my natural attractions. The excitement caused by anticipation, together with the thrill of pleasure I felt in the consciousness that I had never seen any one so tastefully arrayed as the figure I viewed in the mirror, added a glow of animation to my expression.

As I proceeded to the ball-room, Mrs. Bristol's admonition to "retain my self-possession under all circumstances," recurred to me. Could I do it? I was not very confident. On entering, Mrs. Bristol's look of approval steadied me somewhat; but the slight hush in our immediate vicinity, and the knowledge that many eyes were turned towards me, com-

pelled the utmost effort to overcome my trepidation. Introductions followed, and I found myself, through Mrs. Bristol's management, I am sure, tete-a-tete with Lord Riverton, who stared at me obtrusively through his eyeglass, while complimenting me. I did not feel certain as to how he intended his flattering remarks to be understood. Surely he did not expect me to take such personalities seriously! It seemed equally impossible that, on such short acquaintance, he would use such expressions in a bantering way. Therefore I did not know how to reply,—but as I must say something, I concluded to treat his remarks as good natured jests to a girl having her first experience in society, and said laughingly:

"Really, Lord Riverton, you do not know how vain you may make me."

"Vain! That were impossible to one with such soft and gentle eyes."

"Oh, I assure you, I am growing very conceited."

"A small fault in one who must perceive an admirer in every beholder!"

"I am surprised that those in the room show so little appreciation! Is it not strange they are not silent with admiration and wonder?"

"Ah," said he, "one so accustomed to homage as Miss Seymour can but regard my poor tribute as insignificant."

"Indeed, you are quite mistaken. Your sincerity is so evident, your judgment so penetrating, that I feel perfectly safe in accepting your opinion!"

Lord Riverton gave me a quick, questioning glance and bowing, said:

"Miss Seymour honors me!" But he looked uncomfortable, and a silence fell. Just then another introduction demanded my attention. More compliments followed, to which I fear my replies were not always conventional. Really, there was no conversation, in the ordinary sense of the word, throughout the whole evening. I cannot now recall a sentence which was not the most commonplace remark, the most fulsome flattery, or at best, a more or less direct compliment. The refreshments were declared delicious; the music enrapturing; the decorations so exquisite; and the beauty of the ladies so entrancing.

Judging from my observation of those near me, the experience of the other ladies did not differ from my own. I noticed, however, that they received the remarks upon their personal charms in rather a different manner from that in which I received mine. A lady, when told that she sang like a seraph, replied, "Thank you very much." Another, when her partner declared that she danced like a fairy, said, "You make me wish to dance forever." One, when complimented on her fascinating and peerless beauty by a gentleman who begged her hand for the pleasure of a dance, returned:

"It would be impossible to refuse your agreeable request."

Mrs. Bristol says all this was merely harmless flirtation, and that the "shy, and rather shrinking manner" in which I received the eulogistic tributes showered upon me, but riveted the chains with which I bound my victims. I have not repeated to her my conversation with Lord Riverton, for I soon found

that such compliments formed the substance of such conversation as went on around me.

Miss Ogden was so delighted to make my acquaintance,—said that she had been told yesterday that she would need to be careful to-night, or she must lay down her scepter. In great distress I began to protest, but she stopped me, saying that she would not have me suppose her so lacking in appreciation that she could not recognize radiant and unrivaled beauty; nor, recognizing it, that she had not the nobility sincerely to congratulate the happy possessor of such charms.

I assured her she was mistaken in thus rating whatever about me might be pleasing, and expressed a wish that she would forget all these things.

"Simply be my friend," said I, "and I hope you will let me be yours."

"Just the thing!" she replied, "you are quick in understanding a situation. And that air of simplicity becomes you the best of anything you could adopt. This season we will present something unique. We will be friends instead of rivals, and each by way of contrast will emphasize the attractions of the other."

"But you do not understand me. I mean that,—" I began,—when, tapping me on the shoulder, with a smile she turned away to greet others.

Of course Miss Ogden and I can never be friends. Either our ideals are different, or she is a calculating girl. In either case we can have nothing in common. Query: In what other place could I be, where, from my simple presence there, I could be

so misjudged? I wonder if others were thinking the same of me!

Mrs. Bristol says that Miss Ogden considers herself vanquished, and sees that joining her forces with mine, on terms of equality, is the only chance of maintaining her position as the peerless beauty of New York; and she again warned me not to let Miss Ogden patronize me, as that would give her a conclusive advantage. I told Mrs. Bristol that I would be no one's rival, but she merely laughed, saying:

"We shall see if Miss Ogden has things all her own way."

All this is very unsatisfactory and disappointing.

Besides those who were engaged in complimentary dissertation, were the young people who said but little, and seemed to think what they did say very amusing, for they laughed continuously, and I wondered what they were so merry over. When, in the course of the evening, I happened to be in their vicinity, I found nothing that was to me amusing. A young man made some flippant remark at which all in his neighborhood were convulsed with laughter; a young lady replied in a similar strain, and again there was a burst of merriment. It reminded me of the little girls at Mrs. Bradford's, at the beginning of a new school year. When sent out to the play-ground for the first time, for a while they would regard each other shyly; then one after another would break out into a little laugh; presently, as they overcame their timidity, they would all laugh together. But here the comparison ends,—for the children soon found something of

interest,—to themselves, at least,—to talk about; which these young people seemed unable to do. I used to enjoy the laughter of the little girls, for I knew it prepared the way for happy companionship; but the laughter of these seemingly grown-up children promised neither entertainment nor instruction. As I cannot laugh at anything that does not appeal to my sense of humor, my interest in them ceased.

At another time I found myself near a group of elderly ladies, who were discussing society occurrences, conjecturing probable happenings, and now and then remarking upon the toilets, movements and prospects of those present.

Occasionally I noticed a group of elderly men gravely conversing. But very soon Mrs. Bristol would appear among them, and in her cordial, easy manner, disperse them in various directions; one to talk with a lady, for the moment disengaged; another with a message to a person in a remote part of the room; a third was asked to bring her fan from a place where it had been left; and so on, until she had broken the circle,—in the meantime managing to bring together other people as best suited her purposes.

Mrs. Bristol declares that grave conferences must not be permitted, if one hopes to carry a ball through to a successful end, and complains that middle-aged men require a deal of looking after. She also informed me that she kept a constant watch lest I lead some one into a discussion of philosophical or social questions, which would have thrown a shadow over the whole company. Mrs.

Bristol's guests pronounce her a perfect hostess, and greatly admire her ability in keeping every one engaged, and in good spirits, as well as on good terms with themselves and every one else.

I really did enjoy dancing to the time of that grand orchestra; yet, after awhile I found myself wearying of this style of music, and longing for something deeper, more soul-moving,—something classical, which stirs, rouses and elevates my whole being,—in comparison with which the music adapted to the ball-room sinks into insignificance. Until I join the great orchestra in the hereafter, I shall never be able to express in words or song what the masterpieces of great musicians on earth have meant to me.

I also enjoyed the graceful and artistic arrangement of the rooms, and of all that went to make the evening a success in its way. I should have enjoyed the apparent cordiality and urbanity of the guests had there been less flattery, and had I not been oppressed with a remembrance of some of Mrs. Bristol's remarks on politic politeness. It would have given me rare pleasure, had I been permitted to enjoy the marvelously beautiful costumes of the ladies, and the elegant,—sometimes too exquisite, bearing and attire of the gentlemen; for I love to look at beautiful people and imagine that their characters are as beautiful as their exteriors; but as it was, the deference and tributes paid to myself and those around me were so embarrassing as to seem almost indelicate. And as I intimated before, Mrs. Bristol's remarks echoed in my ears and heart, so that I felt there was a lack of sincerity

in what I was hearing, which greatly marred my enjoyment of what would otherwise have given me great pleasure. I wondered, too, how many plans and schemes were being carried out by means of those flattering expressions and sweet smiles.

I could not help thinking how delightful it would have been, if those who I am sure could talk and talk well, instead of confining themselves so closely to laudatory personal remarks, only would have introduced a little more bright, animated, yet sensible conversation on subjects that must interest, more or less, all intelligent people. Had none of the guests recently seen a superb painting; a master-piece of statuary or architecture? Could no one recall a stanza from some rising poet, or quote a sentence from some original thinker, making enough comment to show a gleam of thought that would cause us to long for an opportunity to hear more? Would not this have been as compatible with really merry pastime, as the "done to death" compliments? Truly, I did not hear one sally of what could be called real wit or genuine humor; only that continuous strain of flattering and parrying. If these people had no fund of humor within themselves, surely it would have been permissible to quote from some humorist or satirist they had read! No,—really, it was not fun nor merry-making. I wonder what people attend these balls for.

I suppose it would have been considered bad form had I mentioned to one of my nartners the excellent and helpful sermon I heard last Sunday at Hampton. This is a question with me,—if the general atmosphere of the ball-room debars literary reference, all

comment on social conditions and remedies, and especially renders any allusion to religious matters objectionable and out of place,—is the ball-room then a proper place for an earnest, intelligent Christian?

If all that truly and deeply interests me has no admission to the ball-room, what shall I find there that can have any attraction for me?

As I began this entry, so I must close it,—with the question: having been to a fashionable ball, as a result am I any better satisfied with life? Am I clearer as to my convictions of duty? As things look to-night, I could not return an answer favorable to the ball-room.

However, I will not be hasty in my conclusions, but will watch and wait awhile longer before deciding what position I shall take upon this question. I suppose I shall find an answer to my inquiries ere long.

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Dec. —, 18—.—

Ever since I reached New York I have been in a whirl of social engagements. Calls, dinner parties, concerts, theaters and balls fill my programme until long after Christmas. I have little time to think quietly.

Learning that Mr. Granby was in the city, I mentioned my acquaintance with him. At once Mrs. Bristol started up, exclaiming:

"Do you know the Honorable H. Granby? Why, he is one of the lions of the hour! Did you say he asked you to inform him of your arrival? Pray do so at once! As an orator he has made a national

reputation; he has been a successful statesman also; many say that the state governorship is now within his reach.

"They do say, too, that he is uncomfortably unconventional in his ideas, although a model gentleman in dress, manners, culture and education. But then, you know, we allow and admire eccentricities in men of his position which we would not tolerate in lesser lights."

"Is he then so very rich?"

"Rich? No! But he is famous. I believe he is a very talented and able lawyer; although he thus commands a fine income, he spends so much time and money reforming the world and fighting corrupt city corporations, breweries, saloons and all that sort of thing, that he is not likely to get rich very soon.

"Nevertheless, he is well connected, and was introduced in New York by the Clintons, who are really the most exclusive people in the East. Mrs. Clinton I have beheld from afar; her fine patrician face always stands in my mind for all that is aristocratic and well descended. In truth, I suppose hers is the bluest blue blood in the country."

"She must be a superior woman to be the intimate friend of the Granbys."

"Of the Granbys! Do you know other members of the family?"

I told Mrs. Bristol I had made the acquaintance of Miss Isabelle at the home of a mutual friend. I also told her what I had heard concerning the family.

"Dear me!" said she, "this is fine. Of course

Mr. Granby will call, and an acquaintance with the Clintons will follow. My dear, you have done me the best turn I have had for many a day! Do you know any more such people?"

"Oh, yes!" I replied in a teasing mood. "I know Nellie Millburn, a teacher at Hampton, and Miss Case who teaches at ——."

"You provoking girl! Answer my question."

"You asked if I knew any more such people as the Granbys; since I consider these young ladies as cultured and interesting as the Granbys, I mentioned them. I think, too, Mr. Granby would approve my judgment."

"Oh, you wee lambkin! If some one does not guard you and protect you, the dissolute, hypocritical fortune-hunter will eat you up some day!"

"Mrs. Bristol, I do not like that! Although your remarks would insinuate that I have little capability or judgment, thus far, at least, I have found little difficulty in distinguishing self-interested people from those who are sincere. Moreover, I am not in a hurry to be eaten up by any one."

"Now, child, don't be foolish! It is more than evident you are in no hurry; otherwise Lord Riverton would not have failed to secure from you a share of favor that would mark him as preferred above all rivals; to say nothing of a score of others who are scorching their wings hovering around you; an alliance with any one of whom would have been considered a brilliant success by any young lady save yourself.

"These young men do not pretend to be very good,—that is the trouble. I must give them a

hint as to where they may find the road that leads to your heart. I am glad Mr. Granby does not seem to be a marrying man, or I should expect to see him bearing away the prize. Whatever advantage it may be to know him socially, he is not my ideal of a suitor for you. There now, I have vexed you again!"

And she drew me down beside her on the sofa, petting me, and telling me she would not have me get angry with her for the world. There is no use arguing with Mrs. Bristol, so as soon as I could get away, I came to my room.

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Dec. —, 18—.—

Mr. Granby called this afternoon. While shaking hands he gave me a quick, searching glance, unobserved by others, and rather felt than seen by me. I wore a rich, but simply made white velvet dress with few ornaments. In some way that I cannot explain, I was conscious that he was pleased with my appearance. As usual, I was so perfectly at ease in Mr. Granby's presence that I felt not the least embarrassment.

Mrs. Bristol has invited Mr. Granby and others to a dinner party for one evening this week. He intimated that at that time we would probably have an opportunity to make some plans for me to see the other side of New York life and interests.

Yesterday I was at —— Church, where many New York society people attend. I must write to Esther that if Episcopal Church people are reverential in their church manners, all of their clergymen are not so. Yesterday morning the clergyman

hurried through the reading with really indecent haste, even mumbling the prayers; the congregation seeming infected by his example. I was as much shocked by the absence of anything like real worship, as Esther was by the restlessness of that Methodist congregation about which she wrote me.

CHAPTER XX.

Dec. —, 18—.—

This evening I received two letters, one from Mrs. Rodgers and one from Miss Case. I will copy the part of Mrs. Rodgers' letter in which she refers to social amusements.

Boston, Dec. 18th, 18—.

My dear Julia:—

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I am not in the least surprised that things impress you as they do. I should have been greatly mistaken in your character and principles had it been otherwise.

I think you are quite correct in your opinion of dancing, and I also agree with you that much the same may be said of theaters and card parties. They lack the true element of wholesome amusement, and contain much that is objectionable. I especially approve of all you say about the ball dress, and the exposure of person to which it subjects the wearer. Although the divine artist never made anything more beautiful than the human form, yet the customs of civilized society for centuries, and the inherited tendencies of the race are such, that any style of dress which unnecessarily exposes its outline, is, to say the least, ill advised.

I, too, am deeply grieved that wine has so prominent a place at all these entertainments, and I am humiliated that women, even young women,

use their influence to promote its use. As things are, there are few circles of society, or places of amusement,—and I greatly fear, few of our Christian colleges, where mothers can safely send their young sons, feeling that here there are no young women who use their influence to promote the use of the wine cup.

I need not further supplement what you have said about the ball-room, but will add a few thoughts on some points which you have not touched concerning theaters.

Mr. Rodgers used to say that he thought it inappropriate and inconsistent for respectable people to countenance, or indorse by attendance, any place of entertainment where the performers were people, whom, on account of their doubtful character, they would be unwilling to receive in their homes as friends, or recognize as acquaintances on the street.

It cannot be denied that there have been actors and actresses who were good men and women; but for my part I do not want my associations to be such, that when I die, it will be necessary for some one to explain to the public that, notwithstanding my profession or occupation, and associations, I was really a pure woman. I want that fact to be so established that to mention any necessity for an explanation would be a disrespect. The public is always uncertain as to the character of actors and actresses; and those among them who live pure personal lives have to bear the taint which attaches to the reputation of the profession in general. I cannot help thinking there must be something lack-

ing in their self-respect, if nothing more, when they choose and remain in such a profession.

* * * * * * *

I think Mrs. Rodgers is right.

Miss Case, in her letter, mentions having seen Mr. Cooper again, and that he is really greatly improved, is studying hard, and taking advantage of all his opportunities to the best of his ability. She seems hopeful of his success in his new ambitions.

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Dec. —, 18—.—

This evening Mr. Granby and several others were here to dinner. Among the guests was a Mr. Volt, who is a rising author. He is very cynical, and has a characteristic way of emphasizing people's weak points that is not always agreeable. Mrs. Bristol detests Mr. Volt, but says she must endure him because, just now, he is quite the rage.

When we returned from the dining-room, in some way a few of us who happened to be grouped together, were drawn into a conversation about dancing. I expressed much the same opinion that I already have written in this journal, as to what I thought would add much to the interest and enjoyment of such entertainments. To this Mrs. Bristol objected, saying:

"But, my dear Miss Seymour, people go to balls to enjoy the music and dancing and prefer to abandon themselves, for the time being, to that amusement, with the mind unincumbered with more than the pleasure of the hour."

"I can understand," I replied, "how one might

enjoy an hour of such pastime, but the thing that I cannot comprehend is, how one can go through with it night after night, for four or five months out of every year."

Then Mrs. Bristol declared that I would change a ball-room into a conversazione, to which I returned:

"I do not see why a little feast of reason would not be quite consistent with any sort of amusement, as well as add zest to the enjoyment of the hour."

"Any discussion of this sort," urged Mrs. Phillips, "however informal and desultory, would be unenjoyable to half the younger guests; the majority of the other half of the young people would probably say that when they wished to hear such matters discussed they would attend the various clubs organized for these purposes."

"But, Mrs. Phillips, I am not contending for literary, or any other discussion at your balls. Indeed, I would retain and encourage more real merriment and wit than I have yet seen, all of which would be quite in keeping with a little of the rational conversation for which I am pleading."

"After all," began Mr. Granby, "more important than the matter of present enjoyment, is the question as to what will be the result of spending so much of life in this way. Will not one who, from early youth, thus invests his time as well as his physical and mental power, become in reality as light headed and as empty hearted as the dancers have impressed Miss Seymour as being? Must not those who spend their years and energies on trifles, themselves become mere triflers? All amusements should be judged from the standpoint of results,

rather than from the pleasure derived from them in the present hour."

"That," said I, "reminds me of a sermon I heard in the city last summer, in which the clergyman said that all we say or do, and all with which we come in contact, enters into and becomes a part of our life and character. Then how can we afford to live for mere amusement, to say nothing of the time, which, according to this, is worse than wasted? Judged from these standpoints and principles, how shall we reach the best of which we are capable,—how build lofty and steadfast character,—build wisely—broadly, if we give our time and thought to balls, theaters and card parties? These things impress me as being serious matters, for—

'The tissues of the life to be
We weave with colors *all our own*,
And in the field of destiny
We reap as we have sown.'"

"I am surprised," followed Miss Hamilton, "to find one who, like myself, does not fully endorse the way in which we society people spend so much of our time. While resting between dances I have often noticed others, and have been struck with the idea that their appearance was so lacking in dignity. I would be unable to control my laughter did not the whole thing seem so absurd, and even pitiful. To see a whole room full of grown up people whirling and whisking around in that way! Why, if they had to work all night like that to accomplish something good and useful, what an outcry they would make!"

"But," resumed Mrs. Phillips, "you know that if we are to have social gatherings at all, we must provide something that will amuse and entertain. Many young people have no taste for such entertainment as Miss Seymour seems to prefer. They are not conversationalists; neither do they enjoy hearing each other talk. I am afraid, without dancing, they would find social events rather dull."

"Yes," exclaimed Mr. Volt, "what are you going to do with those who only know enough to dance? By no means deprive them of the only amusement of which they are capable. Cards, as we have them now, were invented to amuse one of Europe's imbecile kings, and think what a boon they have been to imbecility ever since! Why should not dancing serve the same purpose? No! Let them dance and play cards, for beyond this they are not worth a thought or an effort more than a lot of kittens."

"No," said Mr. Granby, speaking quite seriously, "every one is capable of being his best, and we should never rest satisfied until we have done our utmost to bring those with whom we come in contact up to their highest possibility."

"Do you not think," inquired Mrs. York, "that when these amusements are indulged in with moderation, so far from being harmful, they may be really beneficial in many ways?"

"There are so few who indulge moderately that I am unable to judge. From what I have been able to observe, those who dance at all, usually dance the season through."

"Of course, discretion and common sense must be used."

"I do not question the wisdom of your remark. I only know that very few dancers use discretion. The trouble really lies back of this. It is largely a question of education,—or perhaps of miseducation,—in many cases of no education. Most of the young people in society have, with great expenditure of money, time and effort, been fitted for this sort of life and little else; consequently, they know no other form of amusement or entertainment.

"Others, forbidden to dance without having been given a reason that appeals to their better judgment, break through all restraint and recklessly plunge into a life of real dissipation; while a still worse state of affairs is brought about, when, as not infrequently occurs, one of the parents,—too often, I fear, it is the mother,—assists the son or daughter in secretly attending such places against the direct commands of the other parent. Still others, whose attention has never been called to the evils that may result from indulging in this fascinating pastime, simply dance because the rest do.

"If, from the first, parents and teachers would lay the foundation of an education which trains the child towards the development of his best and greatest possibilities, there would be no trouble in satisfying the young with wholesome entertainment."

"Oh," broke in Mrs. French, "is it not better for people to dance than to spend their time gossiping?"

"I was not aware," retorted Mr. Volt, "that

gossiping had been suggested as a substitute for dancing. I understood that healthy, intelligent amusement was the recommendation. Perhaps I am dull of comprehension. Does Mr. Granby really prefer gossiping to dancing?"

"Can you explain to me what healthy, intelligent amusement is?" asked Mrs. French.

"I doubt if I can," was Mr. Volt's dry reply; and then he continued: "Mr. Granby, the trouble is, you do not understand the aim and end of dancing."

"Well," I ventured, "I have often wondered why people go through so much real toil, and anxiety over many details, through an entire season. I am sure one season will be more than enough to satisfy me, for the rest of my life!"

"Why, Miss Seymour," exclaimed Mr. Volt, "you must be slow of comprehension. How else can people convince one another of their high social standing unless they can boast of an invitation to So-and-so's ball? How can they make known their wealth and their artistic taste, if there are no ball-rooms where they can display their valuable gems and costly attire? And how,—oh, tell me how,—the clever, anxious, managing mammas can advertise the fact that they have marriageable daughters whom they are willing to dispose of to the highest bidder. And when so many are in the field they must each make an effort to outshine all rivals. Therefore, all this flattery, of which Miss Hamilton complains, is not only acceptable, but eagerly listened to by the vain darlings and the ambitious mammas. What are gentlemen to do when they know they are expected to make themselves agree-

able in this way, and that their welcome within the charmed circle largely depends upon their skill in this direction?"

Several of the older ladies exclaimed and demurred at Mr. Volt's way of putting matters, but Mrs. Bristol argued:

"Well, and what is wrong about parents desiring to make suitable settlements for their daughters? Your way of stating it is unfair. Were there no such things as balls and similar gatherings, how would you gentlemen ever meet,—or know of the existence of all the fair girls of New York? I am sure you seem very eager to avail yourselves of the opportunities thus afforded. What would you have? Shall we return to oriental customs where the young people are allowed no voice in such matters, and never meet until their wedding day?"

"A gentleman always must own himself worsted in an argument with a lady. In this instance your triumph is most apparent, since young people in America are never allowed to meet except at balls."

Mrs. Bristol made no reply to Mr. Volt's rude remark, which was the nearest approach to anything like an expression of displeasure I had ever seen in her. Miss Hamilton broke the momentary silence by saying:

"But to return to the question of the necessity of balls as we now have them. What is their purpose?"

"They answer many ends," explained Mrs. Phillips, "amusement, opportunities to make desirable acquaintances, exclusion of the undesirable (of course I do not approve of the public ball), contact

with first society people, and advantages in many ways."

"But, Mr. Granby," persisted Miss Hamilton, "simply as an amusement,—like snow-balling, for instance,—do you think dancing necessarily wrong?"

"Of course, any one knows that simply moving about to the time of music,—in itself,—can have no evil effect. Neither am I prepared to say that dancing might not be carried on harmlessly. As Miss Seymour said some time ago, one can understand how it could be enjoyed for an hour or so, to which I again reply that so few thus restrict themselves in dancing that, for myself, I am unable to judge what the results of such dancing might be. But the question that faces us is, why is the social atmosphere of the ball-room what it is? Few amusements so easily lend themselves to evil, or can be so combined with what all moral people condemn, or at least consider questionable, as dancing.

"I have only mentioned facts without going into causes, which every one can study for himself. As, perhaps, least among the causes that could be named, is the fostering and cultivation of vanity, rivalry and pride. In the train of these, as has been intimated, we shall find flattery, insincerity, and finally falsehood. With truth destroyed and conscience dulled, the flood-gate of moral destruction is open."

"I hope," said Mrs. Bristol, "you do not judge us by these standards."

Bowing towards us, Mr. Granby replied:

"My presence as a guest in this company answers that question."

"But do you think these results necessarily follow?" again inquired Miss Hamilton.

"We are likely to be more or less affected by the influences with which we surround ourselves. The history of more than one generation is necessary to illustrate the truth of much that has been said to-day. But the reply to a single question may help you to answer your own inquiry. What noted men, who have accomplished great things, have been especially fascinated by ball-room attractions?"

After this Mrs. Bristol skillfully guided the conversation into other channels; and as she managed to engage Mr. Granby's attention during the remainder of the evening, we had no opportunity for talking over old plans. Upon taking his leave, Mr. Granby asked me what day I would be free to visit the art exhibition. I mentioned Monday afternoon, at which time, Mr. Granby said, we could consider the matters in which we were interested.

After her guests were gone, Mrs. Bristol referred to the discussion on dancing in a way that showed she considered they had taken an undue advantage of their privileges in thus disapproving of amusements in which they knew their hostess participated. Her husband remarked:

"I was engaged in conversation with the others, but from what I could hear and see, I concluded you had your hands full with Granby and Volt, and that Miss Seymour and Miss Hamilton were proving themselves *enfants terrible.* I was surprised that you let the conversation run on so long. I did my best to hold the attention of my immediate party

lest the discussion become general. Why did you not exercise your prerogative as hostess and introduce a different topic?"

"Well, had it been any one but Mr. Granby I would have done so, but I knew, of course, that he would understand such a maneuver, and I tolerated his unconventionality rather than run the risk of offending him. He can, if he chooses, bring us into touch with a class of people with whom I am most anxious to be on terms of intimacy. But I think Miss Seymour ought to have helped me instead of leading every one deeper into the discussion."

"I am sorry," I returned, "if I have trespassed on forbidden ground; but I was so intensely interested that I never thought of your objecting to the subject. Pray pardon my offense."

"Oh, never mind! Of course I was annoyed,—but it is of no great consequence, although I must confess it was a new experience for me. It is a pity you are so intense, Miss Seymour; if you could at least assume a more cool and dignified indifference, you would make society matters easier for yourself, and more comfortable for others."

I had never seen Mrs. Bristol so near manifesting impatience, and was greatly distressed. Indeed, the tears were too near the surface to permit my speaking. Seeing this, she laughed lightly, resumed her usual affable manner, and began speaking of something else. When bidding her good night, I said:

"I am so sorry to disappoint or annoy you. You know, when I first came, I told you I thought I should not succeed in meeting your expectations."

Putting her arms around me, she kissed me, saying:

"My dear child, do not trouble yourself about this a moment longer. The fact is, that although occasionally somewhat inconvenient, your unstudied frankness has a unique charm peculiar to yourself. I would not have you different in any way,—unless it might be to have you more ambitious about your own interests."

"Oh, I *am* ambitious—only in a different way from what you mean."

I am more and more convinced that this sort of a life would trammel and handicap me in a way that would prevent freedom in living a consistent Christian life.

CHAPTER XXI.

Enough has been given in the preceding chapters of Julia's journal to show the conclusions to which she came concerning dancing, and how she reached them. After the holidays she managed to avoid, to a certain extent, the many engagements that had hitherto claimed her entire time. By this means she obtained opportunity to study for herself, under the guidance of Mr. Granby, the poverty-stricken side of life in the great city.

During her stay at Sunset Park, Julia had studied the various enterprises in which her money was invested, and not from books only, for later in the fall she made several short visits to the mills, factories, warehouses and mercantile establishments belonging to her. At these times she carried on her investigations, not only from a business standpoint, but from the position of one interested in the circumstances and welfare of the employés. Before leaving the home of Mrs. Bristol, Julia formed systematic plans for benefiting those in her service, which, later on, were developed and carried out. Of course she was not able, personally, to supervise this work. But about this time, Miss Kate Holmes, Mrs. Rodgers' niece, became Julia's special secretary. Among other things, during her first year in this work, Miss Kate made lists of those engaged in the various departments of business, and was instructed to keep herself informed

of all family events. When a new member entered the family of an employé, an express package came to the home containing everything by way of wardrobe, or other necessaries either mother or child could require. If a wedding was to take place, the bride received something for the home appropriate to the circumstances of the recipient. Was there sickness in a family, the daintiest of jellies and whatever could add to the comfort of the sufferer, or hasten his recovery, found its way to the sick room. When death entered a home, flowers were sent and a carriage waited upon the bereaved. Afterwards, a kind letter of sympathy was written, and if possible, the secretary arranged for some one to visit them personally, offering such comfort as they were prepared to receive. Books were also sent, and everything possible done that could in the least cheer them in their affliction. If a widow or orphan were left destitute, help was given until they could arrange for their own support. In short, every opportunity was utilized to bestow real benefit upon those in Julia's employ, the greatest tact and delicacy being exercised to help them, but at the same time never to wound their self-respect. Great care and discrimination were used also, never to encourage a disposition to neglect either duty or careful economy because of expectation of such help. Where such attentions were inappropriate, Julia's personal interest was manifested in some other way, so that all connected with her in business matters, came to consider her a real friend. Arrangements were also being perfected at this time for the establishment of libraries within easy

access of the greater number of employés. A movement was also set on foot to provide Sunday services, and where the interest seemed to warrant it, to erect places of worship, in localities distant from churches. Ministers were to be stationed at such places, towards whose support the people so served would have the privilege of contributing as they were able. The people were consulted respecting their choice of denomination, for Julia was most liberal toward all evangelical churches, as was manifested by her frequent and sometimes large gifts to the different societies.

Having completed these plans, the first of March Julia accepted an invitation to accompany Mrs. Clinton to the Pacific coast. Mrs. Rodgers remained behind to assist Miss Holmes.

It is greatly to be regretted that space cannot be afforded for a few of the many letters Julia wrote me at this time, giving interesting accounts of her journey along the coast, as well as her beautiful word pictures of mountains, plains and valleys. She enjoyed these as only one of her capacity could.

The months of July and August she spent exploring the great lakes from the western extremity of Superior to Niagara Falls, and thence to the mouth of the St. Lawrence river. Julia then took a trip to the Central Western states, and as she wended her way southward, gave me the pleasure of a short visit. October and November found her reveling in the beauty of the Southern states.

While at San Francisco, Lord Riverton appeared upon the scene, but did not remain long, as he soon

found that Julia declined to accept the offer of his title and heart; after which he found it more agreeable to continue his American travels alone.

Returning to New York in December, Julia, with Mrs. Rodgers and Miss Holmes, took up her abode in her stately city mansion. As would be expected, Julia was as individual and unique in the management of her home, and in her attitude toward society, as she had been in everything else.

With the familiarity of an intimate friend, Mrs. Bristol called before Julia and Mrs. Rodgers were fairly settled. After admiring the magnificence of the place and its appointments, she turned to Julia, and laughingly said:

"But of what use is it all? You will never have any one here but grave philosophers, philanthropists, and doctors of divinity, who will never notice their æsthetical surroundings. I suppose you will have an inscription over the entrance to the house, 'None laugh who enter here!' "

Julia laughed right merrily as she returned:

"Come to our reception next week on Thursday, and see! By the way, I want to ask your advice about some matters."

The next moment they were deep in discussion as to the arrangement of the rooms for the reception, considering questions of costume and other details connected with the coming event. When this was settled to their satisfaction, Julia said:

"I give a reception to the city missionaries of all denominations on Tuesday evening, following this affair. I shall expect you to come and help me entertain them; you are to wear your prettiest,

most becoming dress, and air all your charms and graces for their benefit." Mrs. Bristol made up a comical face of horror and despair. Anticipating her reply, before she could speak, Julia continued:

"Oh, yes, you are coming, and you are going to behave your sweetest too; so are Mrs. Clinton, and Mrs. Oliver, and ever so many more. The house will be full! Oh, I assure you, it will be quite the fashion, so you need not hesitate!"

Mrs. Bristol colored, but laughed good-naturedly, saying:

"You are a naughty girl! Well, we will see about it."

She did come,—to both receptions, and contributed much to the success of the first and the enjoyment of the second. When leaving the latter, she whispered to Julia:

"Really, dear, these missionary people are quite interesting. I had no idea they had so much life and animation."

"Have I not always told you that the merriest, gladdest people in the world are those whom you call 'such intense Christians'? And I am sure I do not know who has a better right to laugh heartily and joyously than 'a child of the King.' "

"Well, perhaps I'll join you sometime in your expeditions with them."

And she was as good as her word. Indeed, taking an active part in mission work became for a time something of a fad, not only with Mrs. Bristol, but with many other very fashionable ladies. About this time I received a letter from Julia, a part of which was as follows:

New York, Dec. 20th, 18—.—

My dear Esther:—

* * *

Yes, Mrs. Bristol and her friends are manifesting their interest in the masses of New York in many helpful ways. But, oh, Esther! I feel that their hearts are not really in the work. So long as it is a popular thing to do, and influential people lead in the matter, they are willing to make it a fad; but there are among us, too, certain ambitious women, who, just so long as it gives them prestige or influence, will contend for offices and power to control and direct affairs. But as soon as something new, be it what it may, receives attention from those whom they wish to follow, and whose approval they would make any effort to secure, they will drop out of this work and forget its existence.

There are, however, ladies, who, like Mrs. Clinton, have taken a steady hold on these interests, and who will not be in the least affected by the popularity or prejudice the work may find among those I have mentioned. If there were only more like them! And what wonderful things could be achieved, if all who appear thus interested were only so indeed! What a pity there are so few who are sincerely in earnest in their Christianity!

Of course, this state of affairs obtains in all philanthropic and charitable organizations. How much to be deplored is the fact that in such work any one should be led by sinister motives! But, as Mrs. Rodgers says, even those who are actuated by politic motives may be aroused to nobler living and

to act from higher motives, through being brought in contact with the real needs of the world.

* * * * * * *

Albert Cooper visited us the other day. I would not have believed he could improve so much in a year. He is quite manly in appearance and thought,—most of the boyishness of a year ago having disappeared; but he retains the ingenuousness which will always be a part of his manhood.

* * * * * * *

From Julia's journal I will quote a few extracts:

Jan. —, 18—.—

The ladies are still spending one day out of each week in city work. They give a great deal of attention to unimportant matters. To-day, after a lengthy and desultory discussion of matters having little relation to the work in hand, Mrs. Lee, one of the wealthy, earnest women present, said:

"An hour from now I have an engagement at —— street, to look after the funeral of the mother of a large family of poor little children, two of whom are very ill with scarlet fever. I am very anxious to know what will be your decision about the question that came before us last week for consideration, namely, the establishment of a bureau of exchange for the benefit of men and women who are able to work, but cannot find employment. I know of at least twenty people who are out of work and who dread being obliged to accept charity. If the ladies will oblige me by laying these other matters on the table until this bureau can be settled, it will bring relief to many troubled people."

"Do you mean to say," cried Mrs. French, "that you are going into a place infected with scarlet fever? Why do you not hire some one to go?"

"I would have done that because of several women I know who would have been glad to earn the money. But I have found a great hindrance to our work in the belief of the people that, only those who are paid, or in some way receive their support for doing such work, are willing to undertake it. Just last week a man sneeringly asked:

" 'Do you suppose one of your rich ladies would come near a family sick with scarlet fever?'

" 'Yes,' I replied. Now I must make good my word."

"Impudent fellow! They ought to be glad for help in any way."

"Well," continued Mrs. Lee, "I am convinced that if we are to do these people any good, we must show them that our hearts are moved in their behalf; that ours is not a cheap sort of sentimentality from which we derive a great deal of satisfaction, at very little cost to ourselves. When they see that we are ready to spend and be spent to do them good, we shall be able to make them understand and respect the missionaries and other agents we engage to do this work. But, ladies, I am waiting to learn what action you will take about the bureau of exchange."

"Oh," said Mrs. French, "I think we have quite enough on our hands now. Of course we enjoy having to do with charitable interests, but we do not want it to become such a burden that it will interfere with our personal interests and comfort. I

am delighted with this idea of wearing a badge. And do you not think it will have a fine effect if we provide ourselves with black morocco-bound pocket Testaments, and engage in reading them while driving to business meetings or going to visit our districts?"

Seeing there was likely to be a prolonged discussion, I rose and stated that I would be personally responsible for the bureau, if the ladies would grant me permission to do so. They immediately elected me secretary of the bureau and Mrs. Lee departed on her errand of mercy. I know a number of ladies who will assist me with this work; it will be a little difficult to get it started, that is all.

Then Mrs. Russell, a grave, dignified, elderly lady, whose whole soul is in this work, rose, addressed the chair and said:

"I think, ladies, we should be more regular in our way of conducting these meetings. We waste much precious time, which I, for one, can ill afford, in desultory discussions of unimportant matters, and in rambling conversation. The dignity of the work demands,—and we owe it to ourselves,—that we keep its pressing and critical needs in view."

Miss Ford pouted a little over the more serious turn the conduct of the meeting had taken, and in an aside remarked:

"It is no fun to be so stiff. I would like things a little more social and informal."

What a pity there are so few earnest, consecrated women like Mrs. Lee and Mrs. Russell! It leaves such heavy burdens to be borne by the few, which could be carried so much more easily, and with

more far reaching results, if all were deeply interested. Like the majority of those who are anxious to help, my hands are already full, and even with the assistance Mrs. Rodgers and Miss Holmes give me,—and the latter has a clerk,—I find it difficult to attend thoroughly to all I have undertaken. Mrs. Rodgers remonstrates with me continually, because she thinks I am overdoing. But with so much need and trouble in the world, how can I help it?

* * * * * * *

And so the work went on. The destitute and helpless were not neglected; but what was even more important than this, was the work of assisting the discouraged ones, who, through no fault of their own, had become involved in difficulties, and in consequence thereof had been forsaken by most of the professed friends of more prosperous days; but who, with a little timely aid, could easily extricate themselves.

The beautiful city home became a favorite resort for artists, musicians and literary people. Clergyment, philanthropists and those interested in the general welfare of the commonwealth were frequent visitors; educators, scientists, statesmen, lecturers and the better class of politicians often met there. Mr. Granby was, perhaps, Julia's most frequent caller, as on his trips to New York he always spent as much time as he could spare, in her congenial home, and seemed greatly to enjoy its associations. Julia's entertainments usually took the form of a musicale, a literary conversazione, or an occasional reception to such noted or promising persons as

might be in the city. Also, from time to time, receptions were given to the Sunday-school teachers and other especial workers in the different churches. In all this she was nobly seconded, not only by Mrs. Rodgers, but by many other friends whose acquaintance she had made; even Mrs. Bristol added all she could towards helping Julia to carry out her wishes in these matters. The fashionable world did not avoid her; indeed, many of them declared that they received no invitations with more delightful anticipations than hers.

However, as Mrs. Rodgers said, Julia was overworking. But she did so thoroughly enjoy this sort of activity that one had hardly the heart to raise much objection to her course. In one of her letters written to me she said:

"Oh, blessed, blessed service! *All* for Jesus, all for the glory of God! Esther, I know now just what that good woman at Hampton means when she talks about 'tying on little shoes for the glory of God.' You remember how inclined I once was to be dissatisfied because I thought looking after business affairs, and seeing that my money was rightly used, would so consume my time that I would have little opportunity to do personal work. That feeling is all gone now, and I call it high honor to be permitted to do anything for Jesus. I am thankful to be allowed even to add up long columns of figures, and look over and sign business papers; for since He gives it to me to do, this, too, is His service. I am just as conscious of God's presence when doing this, as when praying with a dying man in some wretched tenement house. Besides, it is

now clear to me, what I really always knew, that the money I inherit will do just as much good as any I might earn, if given in the same spirit."

The first of March, having arranged for the carrying forward of the work she had inaugurated, Julia and Mrs. Rodgers took a trip to Mexico. On their way they stopped at Fledding, and so insisted on my arranging for myself and family to spend the summer vacation months with them at some quiet and convenient place, that I promised to do so if possible. As usual, we consulted Mrs. Howard, who of course knew of just such a place as we wanted, and to our great delight, on our earnest insistence, decided to join us with a few of her friends.

CHAPTER XXII.

July —, 18—.—

Well, dear old journal, here we are! It seems too good to be true that Esther, her mother and sisters, Mr. and Mrs. Howard, Mrs. Rodgers, Miss Holmes and myself are all here together, in this roomy, beautiful country boarding house, nestled among the hills and woods of ——. Hammocks are scattered around the broad verandas and under the trees. Down in the corner of the large, well-kept, grassy lawn in front of the house, is a magnificent elm tree, underneath which are rustic seats, where two or more of our party can be found most of the time.

To my surprise I found Mr. Granby here, whom I have not seen since last winter. He and his sister, Miss Isabelle Granby, have been here for a week. Their married sister, Mrs. Willard, is coming in a few days. Dr. Willard finds it difficult to leave his large practice, but we hope to have him with us a short time at least.

July —, 18—.—

Miss Granby and I took a long ramble in the woods to-day; we bid fair to become good friends. She is such a brilliant, beautiful girl, only two years younger than I am. She will finish her college course and then intends to do post-graduate work. How learned she must be! I feel quite insignificant beside her. It makes me regret more than ever my lack of past opportunities.

Well, I can only make the best of such as I still have for reading and private study.

Mr. Granby is a scholarly man, yet when I talk with him I do not feel embarrassed over my meager attainments. It seems very natural for him to explain to me things that I do not understand. Still, when I am alone and think it over, I know that when compared with Isabelle I must seem most deficient and unimproved.

July —, 18—.—

I am surprised to find how much selfishness remains in me. I compel myself to let Esther's mother and sisters have her to themselves most of the time; then, too, Mrs. Howard has some claim on her. Therefore, we have not had one hour of uninterrupted conversation. They are by no means an exclusive family; but not having seen Esther for three years, they naturally feel that they cannot let her out of their sight for a moment. Mrs. Berkely calls me "daughter Julia," and likes to have me sit on a low stool at her feet with my head on her knee, while she smoothes my hair and tells me how much she loves me for my own sake, and because I was such a comfort to Esther for so many years.

Esther is just her own dear self, looking at me and smiling the same as she always did. I wonder what she thinks of Mr. Granby; they talk together a great deal at the table, and she seems to know as much as he does.

No, they do not make me feel like an outsider, for they take me right into their happy circle. I am the exclusive one; I have so much to tell Esther about

that I have never written in my journal and that I cannot speak of before others. Oh, well,—my time will come when I can have her to myself long enough to tell her part of it anyway.

July —, 18—.—

Last evening the Rev. Mr. Gray, a friend of Mrs. Howard and Mr. Granby, came in on the late train. This morning he preached an earnest, good sermon, in the little country church about a mile from our boarding house. Mr. Gray being an Episcopal clergyman, he and the Berkelys became acquainted at once. He seems to enjoy talking with Esther as much as we do. I am glad to see her mother and sisters so happy with her, and am gratified and delighted when eminent people appreciate her. But I do so want her to myself, just a little bit, as I used to have her at school. Yesterday Miss Holmes came also. Thinking she and Mrs. Rodgers would enjoy an opportunity to be alone with each other; and knowing that since Mr. Howard has to be in the city all of the week, he and Mrs. Howard consider the hours they have together very precious, I have remained in my room nearly all day.

Late this afternoon I went down into the parlor and found Mr. Gray and the Granby party there. Hoping to learn more of such matters, I listened while they talked about the increasing poverty in great cities, and of the need of missionaries to teach the people. Miss Isabelle said many bright, opportune things. Finally Mr. Granby turned to me, saying:

"Miss Seymour is greatly interested in all good

works. Perhaps you and she can devise some plan for the betterment of these conditions."

Mr. Gray turned eagerly, and said:

"Yes, I have heard something of Miss Seymour's work, and have come to the conclusion that she realizes how much is needed besides money. We need more men and women who are ready to go, with loving hearts, right in among the poor, miserable people, and teach them personally. If rich people would only show their love by their presence as well as by their contributions, the needy ones would believe in their sincerity, and would no longer think they have reason to feel that only those who need the support given them for doing so, will come to their relief."

"I think," responded Mr. Granby, "that Miss Seymour is one who both works and contributes."

"Then she belongs to a class that has great influence for good. Granby, what you said to me a few months ago in the city, is true. Too many rich people are excusing themselves from doing their whole duty because they give money, which, with their abundance, is no sacrifice on their part. Also, too many poor people are spending their time lamenting because they have little or no money to contribute, and so give nothing."

"I think, Mr. Gray, you can go a step further and say that the majority of people who would have you think them generous, and greatly interested in every benevolence, are simply quieting their consciences by expressing beautiful sentiments,—or in other words, satisfying themselves with talking instead of doing.

"This is, to a greater or less extent, true of all philanthropic and reformatory work. As you know, I have been somewhat engaged in temperance work, but am beginning to feel discouraged and disgusted. I find that where you can succeed in popularizing temperance, you can obtain a sort of success, but it is very temporary indeed. The next new interest or excitement that comes along, attracts the attention of the people,—meantime, the saloon has an easy triumph!"

"What is the reason of this? It can hardly be on account of ignorance, for there seems to be a great deal of lecturing and teaching on the subject."

"No, it is because the temperance people are not in earnest. They would rather temperance prevailed, but when you get right down to the root of the difficulty, there are few who will sacrifice any personal interest for their principles. We have a deal of talking about 'Vote as you pray,' but even the man who only does this has come far short of his duty."

"I," said Mr. Gray, "have had little connection with the present so-called temperance movement, further than to preach against intemperance as a sin; to deal personally with individuals along the line of urging each man to vote according to his convictions; and in attempting to reclaim drunkards. Hence, I do not know much about the difficulties you specialists have to meet."

"Oh, I am not a specialist. Yet I am often invited to give temperance lectures, and to help organize various leagues. The chief difficulty, I

find, is to discover any moral backbone in the so-called temperance people."

"You generalize; tell me some particulars, so I may understand exactly what you mean."

"Well, for example, here is a place in which local option is before the people. I am speaking of the towns now,—not the large cities. One third of the voters are church-members, who can generally be depended upon to vote for no saloon; and the same can be said of many who are not professing Christians. But a great majority of the business men, who may be total abstainers personally, will tell you that it is to their interest financially to have licensed saloons in the place. They say that the saloon tax pays for the sidewalks, street lamps and other necessaries, thus lessening the general property tax. They also claim that people who would otherwise go to more distant towns to sell their produce, and make their purchases, trade here when there is a saloon in the place, thus benefiting business and the town."

"Undoubtedly! And these voters are joined by those in the community who patronize the saloon, thus forming a majority. But what more can temperance people do? They are simply outnumbered, and, as a minority, must submit."

"If they were in downright earnest,—if they would take the trouble,—they could do a great deal. For one thing, they could soon prove to business men that it is the total abstainer who supports trade, and not the man who frequents saloons. The latter spends his money in the saloon, for he cannot get whisky without paying for it. But when he comes to the merchant, the doctor, the lawyer or the

blacksmith, he has his purchases, or the services he has received charged to his account. We all know how much a drunkard's promise to pay is worth. And were it otherwise, such a man has little left to spend on his family."

"How would you make this clear to business men?"

"By not dealing with those who are known to vote for licensing the saloon. This would prove a much greater power than mere voting, and can be exercised by every man, woman and child.

"Some say give woman the ballot. But the man who votes for the saloon would not tolerate his wife's voting against his wishes!

"Others say 'Agitate! Create public sentiment!' There has been no lack of this. Have results been satisfactory?

"Still others argue, 'Legislation is the remedy!' I ask, what is the use of further legislation, when we are powerless to enforce the laws we have?

"But by simply looking upon the saloon supporter as a dishonored man, with whom respectable people can have nothing to do in either a social or a business way, the Church and the various temperance organizations could do away with the liquor traffic in six months, even if none of them could vote; and this, too, without a direct appeal to law or politics.

"It looks as if our temperance people enjoy hearing their own voices more than doing commonplace, obscure work,—or making personal sacrifices,—such as not having meat for dinner, or taking the trouble to go to another town to find a true temperance

blacksmith. Oh, no! That sort of thing will not send their names echoing down the twentieth century as apostles of temperance, as they fancy their talking may do.

"I have come to the conclusion that many talk temperance because it is easy and costs nothing; but they are not to be depended upon. Observation has taught me that people may pray long and loud, but the saloon keepers are not a bit afraid, so long as the prayers stay in the church and do nothing else. Many, too, will vote as they pray, but the saloon keepers care nothing for their voting so long as the saloon secures a majority, which, as things are, it is not difficult to do. It is 'the doing something' on the part of temperance people that stirs up the wrath of the liquor men.

"But call on your temperance folks to sacrifice their comfort or convenience, their time or their money, and you will find out how strong their temperance principles are."

"On the same principle," said Mr. Gray, "that when a few really earnest temperance people undertake to enforce the laws that saloon keepers violate, every saloon keeper and brewer in the country is taxed for funds to aid the prosecuted saloon keeper in defending himself; but it will be found that few, if any, will come forward to help the temperance men who are trying to enforce the law. No, sir! They will stand back and say,'They ought to have known better than to try to fight the saloon in the courts.'

"The men who have undertaken to carry the suit through the courts, may be defeated, and in turn

prosecuted and ruined,—perhaps imprisoned; and the mass of so-called temperance people who talk, vote and pray for 'no saloon,' will give themselves no concern about the matter, further than to bewail the liquor power; whereas, they ought to bewail their lack of loyalty to the cause they have espoused."

"You think," asked Isabelle, "that temperance men ought to guard the morals of the people, protect themselves against the danger of the saloon, and stand by each other as stanchly as the whisky men defend and protect their interests, and stand by each other?"

"I think that real temperance men not only ought, but will do so. The trouble is, we have very few conscientious temperance men. I see obstacles are much the same as they used to be when I gave temperance lectures a few years ago. I now refuse all such calls, and tell those who invite me to speak, that when professed temperance people show me reason to believe that they are honest in their professions of temperance principles by doing what they can themselves, I am ready to help in every way I can,—but not until then. Hence, I have been devoting my time to persuading men to become out-and-out Christians; that accomplished, their temperance principles are likely to be correct."

Just then a young man, who came in late last night, and who had been sitting in the room during part of the conversation, but with whom none of us are acquainted, said:

"Mr. Granby, you speak of refusing to trade with

those who vote for saloons. Is not that equal to bribing them to vote for temperance?"

"No, sir. In this country every man is allowed his preference with regard to those with whom he wishes to associate or deal, and can select those who are most congenial and most in harmony with himself and his interests. It is surprising that temperance people do not more generally prefer to associate and deal with each other."

"I must admit your principle to be correct; but do you not think such methods more likely to embitter men, and confirm them in a determination to continue their course, when patience and forbearance would probably lead them to adopt your views?"

"This forbearance has been shown them, and they have abused it. When men are utterly indifferent to the welfare of humanity, so long as their gains are not interfered with, 'patience ceases to be a virtue.'

"Moreover, these men know the right and wrong in these matters. All this talk has, at least, accomplished that, and their continued course in wrong-doing is a forcible answer to those who maintain that education is a cure for the evil. It proves conclusively that education, in itself, is 'a savor of life unto life or of death unto death.' And we are glad to concede that the talking has brought about a few personal reforms. That this is not more generally true is the cause of my dissatisfaction.

"But as far as effecting anything along the line of protection and defense is concerned, very little has

been accomplished. The trouble with these business men, who favor the saloon, is that they have no principle. They vote as they do, simply to promote their own selfish interests. It is personal character with which we have to deal. One of two things must be done; either a man must be moved by his conscience, or he must be made to feel that his evil conduct is disastrous to his interests. In the latter case, the permanence of his reform is doubtful. He stands in the position of one who is a criminal at heart, whose neighbor has cause to regard him as an enemy,—ready to injure him to any extent, if he thinks it is to his interest to do so. Would that neighbor trade with such a man? No, sir.

"When men think as much of the morals of their own and their neighbors' families, as they do of their property, there will be more action and less talk."

"These are not parallel cases."

"No, sir, they are not. It is impossible to draw a case that will parallel in atrociousness that of the man who, by vote and influence, places in the path of the young in any community such a pitfall of destruction as the saloon. Murder does not compare with the heinousness of ruining the character of a young man, and sending him out a wreck, soul and body, to pollute and degrade all with whom he may come in contact.

"How a Christian man or woman, in these days of enlightenment, can shun the saloon keeper and at the same time continue to deal with the man who voted to license his saloon, or continue to recognize him as a decent man and a friend, I cannot com-

prehend. I am really forced to the conclusion that such persons are neither sincere Christians nor earnest temperance people. Certainly, a consistent, conscientious man or woman would abstain from the use of any article, rather than buy from one who is a deadly enemy, and who, for the sake of financial gain in mere dollars, deliberately helps to place in the way of their boys, or their neighbor's boys, that which aims directly at their ruin."

"Well, how are these people to be roused and brought to do their duty?"

"Now you have touched the root of the difficulty. I know of nothing but genuine Christian experience that does that. And I care not what profession a man makes, if his Christianity does not help him to do right in this matter, I have no faith in his profession. As Mr. Gray intimates, dealing with the individual is the important work. However, I would not have our efforts confined to this. Therefore, when invited to give a temperance address, I go, and tell the people what I believe to be the plain truth, namely, that if people want to do away with the saloon so much as they say they do, let them begin to *do* as well as to *talk*. I tell them I have no objection to their talking as much as they please, —some talk is of course necessary,—provided they speak the truth; but that I am tired of hearing men and women prate when I know they are doing nothing."

"Well, supposing your method to be right, do you think it practicable? If you refuse to deal with those who vote for licensing the saloon, with whom will you deal? Would it not result in temperance

men being obliged to close up business, and in most cases, cause so much inconvenience that home life would be unbearable? It is easy to suggest these things, but we must remember that if temperance people refuse to trade with these men, they in turn can refuse to trade with temperance people, and thus easily crush them financially."

"What you say is true because so few temperance voters and their families can be relied upon to stand by the cause. You bring us right back to where we started; if the temperance voters, who are the ones that support trade, would take the trouble to combine, and prove faithful to each other, they could win their cause. The opposite party does this most effectively, because it is to their interest financially to do so. But temperance men suppose their interests to lie in another direction, and cowardice, selfishness, or lack of honest principle prevents them from doing anything effective. So long as this is so, they can accomplish nothing through agitation, legislation, voting, or even education, unless it may be to gain a few spasmodic and very temporary victories, which they relinquish the moment they are likely to lose anything in popularity, convenience or money. The responsibility of failure rests on temperance people themselves."

The announcement that dinner was ready broke up the discussion. As we passed out to the dining-room, Mr. Granby said to me:

"I suppose, Miss Seymour, you think me a very rabid temperance man."

"Oh, no, only very much in earnest and tired of half-hearted people and half-way measures."

"Yes, you have understood me."

"But, Mr. Granby, I have been wondering how a person who believes in radical measures as you do, can act consistently with his views. You may find many who agree with you in theory, but I fancy there are few who are strong and courageous enough to carry out their belief. Standing practically alone, how do you manage to live up to your theories?"

"Now, Miss Seymour, you have touched upon a perplexing and painful subject. I do not advocate nor engage in much discussion on this subject with such business men as we have been speaking of. If the method I mentioned could be quietly and generally carried out, the work would be quickly accomplished with little confusion or difficulty. 'Less noise, more work,' is my motto."

"After all, Mr. Granby, is it not, as you have already intimated, really a question of being a loyal Christian, whose consecration means 'Obey God at all hazards and leave results with Him'?"

"Nothing less than that, and the lack of such consecration, and that only, delays the coming of the Christ. It is an individual matter—each one who meets this condition helps the coming of the Kingdom; and all who fail to do so, retard it."

Here the conversation became general, and after dinner I returned to my room. In a short time Mrs. Rodgers and Kate joined me. Mrs. Rodgers asked if I felt she had deserted me. I must have smiled in rather a disconsolate way, for she said:

"I went to call you to our room, but found you had joined the party in the parlor, where you

seemed to be enjoying yourself; and Mr. Granby seems so happy in your society that I would not interrupt you."

"Yes, and he always makes the conversation very interesting," I replied, and then I told them of our discussion. After this we went down to the parlor, where all the inmates of the house had gathered for some singing before we separated for the night.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

July —, 18—.—

This afternoon, Mr. Granby's sister, Mrs. Willard, came. She has the daintiest, most perfect physique I ever saw. She has a very delicate complexion, light brown hair and the bluest blue eyes! Mrs. Willard can wear any color, but looks best in pale pink, as it seems to give her a little more color. Without the least apparent effort, her manner is most perfect and graceful; in her, awkwardness or hesitation would be impossible. But Mrs. Willard's greatest charm lies in her social power. Beautiful, gentle little lady that she is, in her unobtrusive way she takes her place as leader as naturally as she smiles or speaks; she makes every one feel at ease and calls out the best in those with whom she associates. Even Mrs. Howard, with an added queenliness, falls in with the current of Mrs. Willard's influence, and her so doing only emphasizes her own brilliancy of intellect and accomplishment, as even Esther had not imagined possible.

I am startled about Esther! From the first it was apparent that Mr. Gray especially enjoyed talking to her, and had a way of finding a place at her side, —but this did not surprise me,—who does not admire Esther? It has given me great satisfaction to see how she is appreciated here. However, it has begun to dawn upon me that Esther is not

altogether indifferent to Mr. Gray. It is becoming quite apparent that she is well content to listen to accounts of his work, and her face glows with a great interest when he tells of the wide opportunities in connection with his mission.

I am afraid I should not be quite pleased if anything serious came of this. Of course, I desire her highest happiness and good, but I have always been so ambitious for Esther,—I should be dreadfully disappointed in case she should enter into a lifelong co-partnership with Mr. Gray in his missionary work amid such uncongenial surroundings. I have so wanted her in a position where her endowments should have no limitations set to them. I do not forget her spiritual needs,—but I know that her supplies are boundless, and she does not fail to avail herself of them. I must remember, however, that He who thus provides for her spiritual needs will provide all else that is necessary,—all this has been in my thought for Esther. Oh, what have I not planned for her!

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July —, 18—.—

To-day I received a telegram telling me of Mr. Markham's sudden death from heart disease. This is sad news, for I have come to look upon Mr. Markham as a kind and faithful friend. I start immediately for the city, Mrs. Rodgers and Kate accompanying me.

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July —, 18—.—

We returned from the city last evening. This is the first time since I was a child

that I have been called to mourn the loss of a friend; and I do mourn for Mr. Markham.

Yesterday I asked Mrs. Markham if it would distress her too much to talk with me a few minutes. She said no, so I took the liberty to inquire if her husband had left his affairs so that she and her two daughters could live in comfort, without undue anxiety. She told me that Mr. Markham had for some time anticipated dying thus suddenly, and had made all necessary provision for his family. In his quiet way, Mr. Markham has been an earnest, faithful Christian, and we can rejoice in the hope of knowing him in the life beyond.

I summoned Mr. Thurston to meet me in New York to arrange my business affairs and get them in order to place in the hands of a new agent. I fear I shall not be able to find another like Mr. Markham.

Last Saturday, while we were away, Esther's brothers came; so now we are a large company, and every one seems happy but myself. Richard Berkely is a fine looking young man. How queer everything is! He and Kate have struck up a great friendship. They like the same books; they have the same taste in art, although each seems to get different thoughts from pictures and sculpture. I was with them to-day, under the shade of the elm tree, but not being in a mood to talk, I listened to the conversation they seemed to enjoy so much.

July —, 18—.—

This evening, Mrs. Rodgers, who is slow to remark upon such matters, said to me:

"My dear, I think you may have a successful rival in Mr. Gray."

At the moment, the thought of my beautiful, queenly Esther being buried in the dark, loathsome slums of New York, was most unbearable, and I said something to that effect to Mrs. Rodgers, to which she replied:

"But last winter you spent a great deal of your time there, and seemed to enjoy it, although many felt you were fitted for what they believed a more important sphere, and that you were inconsiderate in thus depriving them of your society."

"Oh, that was different."

"How different?"

"Oh,—you understand,—I am not like Esther. I could not fill such places as she could. Think of her bearing and beauty, her exquisite taste and accomplishments, her capabilities and talents."

"Julia, do you think anything is too precious or too excellent to be used in God's service? Should we not give Him our best? You used to complain because you could do so little that cost you anything. Here is an opportunity to prove how deeply in earnest you were. Can you not, without any consideration of self, or of any desire or hope you may have entertained, willingly, gladly, and without stint, give up your friend, who is your dearest possession, to the Master, for this work, if He wants her?"

"What a hard test has been given me! My Esther to spend her life upon those poor, degraded people who cannot appreciate her."

"In God's sight these poor, miserable ones are as

precious as those among whom you would place Esther. Think a moment,—if you were one of these, so starved and distressed, so vile, soul and body, do you not think a beautiful, gifted woman like your Esther would be much more likely to have power to uplift you, than one who was not so endowed?"

"Yes, Mrs. Rodgers, I am sure she would."

"Now, let us suppose that Julia Seymour is a child in one of those squalid places, which are the only homes these poor people know anything about. She has never slept in a clean, comfortable bed, nor had a decent dress; her hair has never been combed, nor her body bathed; she has never had other than stale food, and of that an insufficient quantity. Drunkenness and brawling are every-day occurrences in the family in which she is so unfortunate as to have been born. Whom shall we send after her?"

"Oh, Mrs. Rodgers! What a terrible picture!"

"Whom shall we send?"

"I am sure I would want Esther to come to me. It was she who did come to me, lighted the monotonous, cheerless life in which she found me, and saved me from sinking into discouragement and lethargy."

"One thought more. Our Savior, our infinite Savior, the adored of Heaven, left His exalted throne and came away down to the most fallen of men and women; dwelt among them, was despised, reviled and crucified by them. For what purpose? That He might save them, 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

'Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity, grace unknown,
And love beyond degree!'

"When we think of this great offering, how little seems the greatest sacrifice that we can make; even when we devote to His service those we love most! Since He, with all His infinite goodness, power and wisdom, condescended to make this sacrifice for us, can we say that anything is too valuable, or too excellent, to be spent in the work which our Savior inaugurated and Himself did? Must we not cry out:

'I sink, by dying love compelled,
And own Thee conqueror?' "

"I am overcoming, Mrs. Rodgers, I am overcoming through Christ's all-conquering love."

" 'Weighed in the balance, you will not be found wanting.' Good night, my dear."

"Wait, Mrs. Rodgers, wait a moment, please. There is more I want to talk with you about."

"About yourself, my dear?"

"No, only as Esther and my love for her are a part of myself. But Mr. Gray,—do you think he is the right one? I can give Esther up to God, but I am not sure that I want her to marry Mr. Gray."

"Yes, Julia, to me they seem well adapted to each other. Mr. Gray is certainly Esther's equal in intellect and culture. You have heard him preach; as you know, he makes no attempt at display, but you must have noticed his choice language and power over words, as well as his logical arguments;

while his fervor and earnestness carry his congregation with him at every point.

"As to his family, he is as well connected as Esther. While his friends made no objection to his becoming a clergyman, about his engaging in city mission work they feel somewhat as you do about Esther; he enters upon it without their sympathy, approval or support.

"He is now serving an aristocratic church, which almost idolizes its gifted pastor. They are willing Mr. Gray should continue here, and as is now his practice, spend some of his time visiting among the poor people of New York; but devoting his life to the work they consider a great mistake.

"Mr. Gray is an intimate friend of Mr. Granby, whom you know well enough to understand that there must be something unusual about the man he would receive as such."

"Thank you, Mrs. Rodgers, you have been very kind to me."

July —, 18—.—

I slept very little last night and have had headache all day. So many things trouble me that I have no longer any peace of mind. I am sorry I came here, and would go away if I could do so without disturbing other people and breaking up their plans.

Since my talk with Mrs. Rodgers I have been taking more particular notice of Mr. Gray. He really has a fine, strong face. No, I cannot find fault with his appearance, and knowing what Mrs. Rodgers has told me, I cannot feel that he is unworthy of Esther.

July —, 18—.—

This morning Mrs. Rodgers asked me if I had thought of any one to act as agent in looking after business matters, and when I told her that as yet, I did not know of any one available, she suggested Edward Berkely. She said it was true he was young, but he seemed a man of sound judgment, and it would be a great advantage to secure an agent of whose honesty there could be no doubt. I was delighted with the idea, and seized the first opportunity to speak to him about it. The glad light that came over his countenance was in a moment overshadowed by a look of regret, as he replied:

"I cannot tell you how much I wish I were able to accept the position you offer me; it would be much more to my taste than standing behind a counter as I now do, but I have had no experience that would fit me for such responsibility. I appreciate the confidence you repose in me, but I cannot conscientiously undertake what you ask me to do."

I hunted up Esther and appealed to her, but found that she, too, was doubtful as to the wisdom of my proposition. However, she said she would lay the case before her mother. I called Mrs. Rodgers, and going to Mrs. Berkely's room we proceeded to consider the advisability of the undertaking.

Mrs. Rodgers insisted that Edward had more ability than they gave him credit for; I explained that Mr. Thurston understood matters thoroughly, and would help Edward; while I should continue my supervision, whoever had charge of the business.

Finally, it was settled that Edward would look

after matters for me until I could find some one better qualified for the place.

The increased salary will enable Edward to spend what leisure he may have in reading law; and I shall ask Mr. Thurston to assist him in every way he can.

July —, 18—.—

This evening, after dinner, Mrs. Howard called me to her room, and motioning me to a seat on a stool near her feet, drew my head on her lap, stroked my hair, kissed me and said:

"Julia, dear, something troubles you; will you not tell me what it is?"

I hesitated a moment, for the tears were ready to start, and then replied:

"I have had some trouble with myself about Esther and Mr. Gray; but it is over now,—only I think so much about it,—and other things,—that sometimes I cannot sleep well."

"Do you not think you are rather premature in thus settling Esther's affairs? Mr. Gray has been here such a short time they have hardly become acquainted."

"I have thought about it almost from the first. It came to me with the power of a conviction. I talked with Mrs. Rodgers about it; she, too, has seen it from the beginning."

"I think myself that Mr. Gray and Esther are favorably impressed with each other, but it does not necessarily follow that they will be married."

"I believe they will?"

"Be that as it may, do not worry over it."

"No, I got the better of myself a few days ago,

and if it is best for Esther to marry Mr. Gray I am determined to be happy over it."

"Julia, if you will allow me, I am going to exercise a great privilege,—may I ask if you care for Mr. Gray yourself?"

In amazement I sprang to my feet and stood looking at her, utterly unable to speak.

"Well, my dear, I hope you are not angry with me?"

"Angry!—No! But whatever put such a thought into your mind?"

"Don't look so frightened," she said, laughing, "I simply could not understand why you should worry yourself sick over Mr. Gray and Esther, unless the matter in some way touched you, personally."

"Then you had not thought of it before I mentioned them?"

"I assure you I had not."

"Oh, I am much relieved," and I sank down again upon the stool. "I was frightened lest you and others had misunderstood my attempts to be especially friendly with Mr. Gray; for I have found it hard to forgive him for coming between Esther and myself."

"What an intense little thing it is! But you do not mean to tell me you would not be glad of anything that would add to Esther's happiness?"

"Oh, it is not that!" Then I told her about my talk with Mrs. Rodgers.

"Well, since you are in this frame of mind, I will talk to you on a subject more in harmony with your thoughts than what I was going to say."

"Oh, no, talk to me about both."

"No, you have had excitement enough for one evening. My other subject will keep until you are more composed, for it is a matter on which I want your very best judgment."

"Very well then, for I could not give a sensible opinion on anything to-night."

"I will tell you of some of Mr. Gray's desires concerning his chosen work. He has no thought of my seeking help for him in carrying out his ideas, so you must not suppose that I am his agent in the matter. Since you are a Methodist, I do not suppose it ever occurred to Mr. Gray that you would be likely to interest yourself in his undertakings. He does not know you so well as I do."

"What are his plans?"

"I do not know all his plans; but he wants to carry on a mission in one of the most neglected portions of New York. It is not his wish to make it a charitable institution altogether,—but rather to teach the people to help themselves. Mr. Gray wants to build a large church or chapel, having lecture rooms and Sunday-school rooms. He has been trying day-schools on a small scale, but finds that many of the children he hoped to benefit are kept at home to care for those younger, while the mothers go out to their daily work, washing, scrubbing, or toiling all day in the sweat shops. So Mr. Gray plans to erect a school building containing, in addition to the ordinary educational department, an industrial school for girls, one for manual training for boys, a kindergarten school and play-rooms, dining-room and nursery. Here the children

could be taught and their dinners given them, for which those old enough to do so, would be required to work a short time daily; and the babies taken care of, thus leaving their mothers free to attend to their work."

"Yes, from what I have seen among these people, I understand the utility of all this."

"Mr. Gray also desires to build a comfortable home for the missionary to live in—by the way, I never heard him mention the need of a home until he came here; perhaps he is thinking what would be necessary if such a woman as Esther were to be mistress of it. That would be in accord with your opinion as to what is to be the outcome of affairs."

"Oh, Mrs. Howard! I see some splendid possibilities,—but go on, please."

"I have heard Mr. Gray speak, too, of having work-shops and wood-yards, where people who are out of work can earn their board and lodging until steady employment can be found for them. To make this possible, a building suitable as a boarding house for the laborers will be required."

"His plans are quite extensive. Nevertheless, I can see my way to help him, in any case; but if Esther is to be connected with such a mission, how especially I would enjoy putting things into shape!"

"You must remember it will cost a great deal of money; as Mr. Gray will manage it, it will branch out, and can be limited only by a lack of consecrated workers and means to support it."

"I would be glad to help inaugurate the work, at least, and this I am able to do. If Esther and Mr. Gray stand at the head of it, I can make careful

calculations, and after a year or two, endow the work so as to guarantee it a moderate support. I shall ask Mr. Gray not to make it known that I am back of the undertaking, financially, and probably my contributions will be duplicated by his many friends."

"All this you must arrange with Mr. Gray. Think it over carefully and pray for direction so you may be sure what is just the right thing to do. Do not let your enthusiasm and your love for Esther outrun your common sense, nor cause you to forget your duties in other directions."

"Mrs Howard, I am beginning to understand what people mean when they talk about cross bearing. Hitherto, I have found it such a pleasure to do whatever I could to help make the world better, that I could not understand what people mean when they call Christian work and giving, cross bearing. Now, however, that duty runs somewhat counter to my wishes, I begin to understand it better."

"Well, you must remember that whatever God plans for us, has for its ultimate end our highest good and happiness. He always does the wisest and best thing for us, and it is the height of folly to resist His will, or to be unhappy over His requirements and dealings."

"Why, yes, if Esther does marry Mr. Gray, just see how much happiness I shall gain for myself, besides all the good that can be done; and I was so foolish as to feel quite wicked about it at first; yet, by this very means, I may be able to do for her and through her, what I have wished to do for the last two years."

"Yes, if this comes about, it will be one of the instances where the Lord allows us to see how wise and good are all His ways. From it you at least must learn to abide His will cheerfully, nay, joyfully, even when you cannot see the outcome. I fear we have but a vague understanding of God's love, after all. We apprehend very faintly what an all-wise, all-powerful, all-loving Being He is. We must seek to know more of Him."

"I am glad he does not leave me all alone to find out things, but takes such delightful ways to teach me of Himself. I think, hereafter, I shall call duty, joy, even if I do not understand the whys and wherefores of it; or if it sometimes runs quite counter to my most cherished hopes and plans."

"If you carry out your resolution, your life will be full of gladness for yourself and others."

"Do you know, I sometimes think seriously of entering upon mission work myself. I cannot lead an aimless life in fashionable society; neither can I simply settle down to enjoy my wealth, and occasionally give money to such causes as impress me as worthy."

"Careful,—be careful! When you are sure you are called by our Savior to take up any life work, obey, instantly and joyfully. But be careful how you plunge into anything, because, as now seems to be the case, you are unsettled and restless. You are young and can afford to take time to think it over well, and make sure that you are right. 'All things come to him who waits.' After awhile you will see clearly what is your work."

"Yes, that is true. One thing, however, is

certain. I must get things well in motion before Mr. Gray and Esther come to any understanding. I am afraid she may rather upset my plans if they are not well under way by the time she comes to the throne."

"Well, my dear, be careful and considerate in all you do. I will now let you go back to your room, for it is getting dark."

So, bidding her good night, I came away. Finding myself restless and wakeful, I finished writing up my journal.

CHAPTER XXIV.

July —, 18—.—

To-day I had an opportunity of talking with Mr. Gray. The conversation led into a discussion on religious work, in which he gave me his ideal of city mission work. I told him I had heard something about his plans from Mrs. Howard, and was greatly interested in them. I also said to him that if he could meet my conditions, namely, that my name should be in no way connected with the movement, and that no one should know that I had contributed toward the enterprise, or its support after its establishment, I would like to help in making such an undertaking possible.

Mr. Gray seemed very grateful and readily complied with my conditions. Then we talked over plans and he gave me estimates of the cost of the various buildings, with all of which I was well pleased, except that of the missionary home, which I insisted should be larger and better supplied with modern conveniences. To this Mr. Gray replied:

"I planned a very moderate outlay for this, because I anticipated a lack of funds; also, because there seems to be a prevailing opinion that people who engage in special work of this sort ought to be very self-denying."

"I, too, have heard a deal about that, but I am impressed that very many who are so ready to

insist on ascetic living for those who devote their lives to the good of others, are, themselves, anything but ready to set the example. One Christian is as responsible as another for the uplifting of the world. If you are willing to lay aside all that your opportunity, superior advantages and abilities make possible for you, surely those who are not called to make such sacrifices ought not to expect or require you to have less of home comforts than they themselves enjoy."

"Yes, I know that it is not reasonable, and that the same people who talk in this way, ignorant ones excepted, usually do it, because either they themselves do not want to make the sacrifices necessary to carry through such undertakings; or they are in positions where they wish to manage the funds thus saved to carry forward schemes and ambitions of their own. In either case, selfishness is at the root of the matter. Since this is so, I have thought it best to live with the utmost economy, and leave them no excuse for withholding their funds, and compel them from very shame to assist a little."

"You cannot do it. There is no satisfying the demands of these dogmatic, pharisaical, selfish people. We can only ignore them. I really have little faith in the Christianity of any one, who comfortably settles down to the belief that more self-denial is required of men like you than of any one else.

"Now, in my own case, I have consecrated what I possess to the service of the Master. Since you are engaging in the work Christ commanded the church to do, you and I are co-partners with Him in

this service. As a comfortable home and sufficient support are as necessary for you as for me, I believe it to be as much my duty to see that you are thus provided for, as it is to provide for myself."

"That is a correct principle. The responsibility of Christianizing the world rests upon all Christians equally. But since so few of them thus feel their responsibilities, I see no way but to do the best possible with the small means at hand."

"Only, do not call such narrow-minded, selfish people Christians. With your permission, I would like to provide such a mission home as I, myself, would be willing to occupy."

"Miss Seymour, there is yet another point to be considered. I fear that a missionary living in the sort of home the business man considers necessary for himself, would not be able to come into such close contact as is desirable with the class of people among whom I wish to work."

"Now, Mr. Gray,—please excuse me for presuming to differ in opinion with one who has had so much experience as yourself,—but last winter I did a little of this work, and am convinced that the antagonism felt by the classes you refer to is not caused by the wealth of rich people, but by the spirit they manifest. The cause lies in the selfish indifference of the moneyed ones. If a wealthy man or woman goes to them with a true, loving heart, recognizing that they are human beings, and treating them as if they were capable of bettering themselves if the opportunity were given, there is no trouble in getting in touch with them. It is the lack of real sympathy that makes the trouble, and

no amount of money given as alms will ever bridge the chasm."

"I, too, have felt that. Still, the idea that a large house and pride are inseparable, seems so fixed in the minds of both rich and poor that it is hard to overcome."

"Do you not see that even the little, inconvenient house you have planned, will seem like a palace to many of these poor people who live in such wretched places? Moreover, if you have a plain, large house, and make the people truly welcome to come and enjoy it with you, this in itself will prove a powerful auxiliary to your general work. Tell them that this house was placed there by one who loved you and them; and that it is intended for their enjoyment, and also as an inspiration to them to try to win a comfortable home for themselves."

"If you build such a house, with such an understanding of the uses to which it may be put, I make no further objections. Although I do not agree with you in all particulars, I think you are right in your general conclusions. Still I do not want to accept your contributions, and then have you feel dissatisfied with the use I may make of what you have provided."

"I think there will be no trouble on this score. On the principle that I would not be willing for you to occupy a less comfortable home than myself, I insist upon what I have told you. On the other hand, if any home I may ever possess, can help any one to a happier, more successful life, it would be my highest joy to use it in that way. Therefore, I should desire you to do the same with yours. For

this reason I insisted on a suite of private apartments, sacred to your own use, where you could retire from care and work, and rest undisturbed."

"Very well, in these respects we are of one mind. You have put some things in a new light. Few young ladies have thought so deeply on such subjects as these."

"You know, my life work is simply to be just the sort of woman Christ would have me be; hence it behooves me to study my work as carefully and as prayerfully as you study yours."

"That is true."

I came away to think and pray over this great undertaking. More and more I realize the responsibility of those to whom the Lord has given treasure to be used for Himself.

July —, 18—.—

To-day the Berkelys went out for a picnic, Mrs. Rodgers and Kate accompanying them. The Granbys and Mr. Gray have also gone in a large carriage for an all-day outing. Not feeling in a mood to accompany either party, and having a good excuse for not going, since I have not been feeling well, I stayed at home. One of Mrs Howard's children is ailing, so she thought it best to remain with them.

I am going to write something that hitherto I could not tell even to my journal. However, since Mrs. Howard knows about it, I may as well put it down. This afternoon she asked me to come and sit with her in the cool parlor. Presently she said:

"I think this a good opportunity to ask you about the matter I spoke of a little time ago."

"Yes," I replied, "I have been intending to speak to you about that."

"Julia, do you believe me to be a true friend to you; that I would do anything I could to help you?"

"Yes, Mrs. Howard, I am sure of that."

"Well, I am going to prove my friendship for you by running the risk of offending you. I am going to speak to you on a very delicate subject, for unless I do, I fear there may be some misunderstanding and consequent unhappiness."

Wonderingly I replied:

"You will not offend me. What is it?"

"Well, Julia, the other morning, feeling too indolent to read, too unsocial to talk to the lively, pleasant people in the house, and not disposed to endure the solitude and loneliness of my private room on such a beautiful day, I hied me away from this pretty spot to a quiet, shady place in the grove which I am in the habit of visiting. I had been there but a short time when Mr. Granby, who had gone for a walk, passed near, saw me and seated himself beside me. I at once resolved to improve the opportunity by speaking my mind to Howard Granby, and knew there was little probability of interruption in this leaf-screened retreat.

"I drew him out to express his views of life and to mention the aims of his ambition. Then I ventured to broach the subject on my mind by making a remark which led to a conversation that seemed greatly to disturb him.

"'Mr. Granby,' said I, 'you have disappointed me.'

"'I am very sorry,' he replied, 'but tell me in

what way; perhaps I may be able to redeem myself.'

"'Will you really allow me the privilege of a great friend who takes a deep interest in you?'

"'Certainly, Mrs. Howard.'

"'I take you at your word and you are in honor bound not to take offense.'

"'I so consider it.'

"'Well, I am disappointed that you have not felt the appropriateness of a marriage with Miss Seymour. With your high ideals of life, and her intense earnestness to fulfill her mission in the world, I thought there could be no doubt as to the result of your acquaintance. What is the matter? I am sure you are not indifferent to Miss Seymour.'

"Mr. Granby made no reply, but rose and walked to the edge of the little brook near which we had been sitting. As he passed me I caught a glimpse of the struggle in his pale face, but as he stood looking across the stream to the opening beyond, I saw only his tall, well proportioned form, which seemed to speak of strength of body and character that would enable him successfully to combat and overcome every difficulty.

"Presently he returned to his seat beside me, picked up the book he had dropped and aimlessly turned the leaves. Seeing he was not ready to speak, and being uncertain as to what he would say, I waited. When at last he began, his still pale face and suppressed tone revealed the emotion he felt.

"'Mrs. Howard,' he said, 'I admit that I have been much interested in Miss Seymour; I will go

further, and say that she is the only woman whom I have wished to make my wife; and I am sure she is the only one who can ever fill that place. But there are obstacles in the way which render impossible my marriage with Miss Seymour.'

"'I cannot conceive of any possible objection to such a marriage. Since you have told me so much, will you not tell me all?'

"'Yes, I believe it would do me good to open my heart to so true and sympathizing a friend. Undoubtedly I am far too reticent.

"'Miss Seymour is immensely wealthy. Were it otherwise, I would spare no effort to win her. As it is, my sense of honor would not permit me to ask her to share such a home, comforts and privileges as I could offer her. Neither could I be dependent upon my wife financially, as would be the case were she to provide for herself the support to which she has been accustomed.'

"'I am surprised at your unreasonableness, but will not argue that point with you now. Regarding her as you do, has it never occurred to you that she has a right to know your sentiments? Why do you not simply state the facts to her and leave her to act as she thinks right, and for her happiness.'

"'That being the view I had of my duty, I have done so.'

"'Did she refuse you?

"'She could hardly do so when I did not ask her to be my wife, but simply told her of my regard for her and the reason why I could not ask her to share my life.'

"'What did Julia say?' I asked in dismay. 'A

more embarrassing situation for a young lady could not be conceived.'

"'Miss Seymour behaved with perfect grace and dignity, replied that she considered my regard for her as a great honor, bowed, and retired to the house. We had been standing under the great elm tree on the lawn.'

"'Howard, do you not see what an unfair advantage you have taken of an intelligent, fair-minded and beautiful woman? You have satisfied your sense of honor by stating your side of the question, but you have given her no opportunity to do the same without seeming to be what she has been taught to consider unmaidenly. Rather than do that, Julia Seymour would carry the secret of her unasked love to the grave. I must say you have done very badly!'

"'I grant that, but I could not do better under the circumstances.'

"'But if Julia loved you enough to be willing to live in just such a manner as she would were she a poor girl, would you not consider your conditions met?'

"'I do not anticipate that a bright, beautiful girl, like Miss Seymour, would be willing to relinquish her opportunities and most cherished plans for such a reason; especially when I am the man for whom the sacrifice is to be made.'

"'How do you know? Perhaps you are depriving her of lifelong happiness!'

"'Mrs. Howard,' he replied, rising and standing before me, 'I do not believe you realize what this young lady is. You do not know her as I do, who

have watched and studied her for these two years. She is as good and capable as she is beautiful. If you could have seen Miss Seymour while I was telling her of this great crisis in my life, as she stood with the sunlight filtering through the leaves, falling on her golden hair, her fair face, her dainty green and white muslin dress, her beautiful, slender hands clasping the bunch of red roses I had brought from the city, and with such a kind, modest expression on her face! If you could have heard the sweet seriousness and the dignity of her answer, and beheld the quiet grace of her manner as she spoke, and at the end bowed and left me,—knowing and honoring her as I do, it would be presumption in me to ask her to become my wife.'

"'If Julia Seymour loves you, she would count herself honored beyond measure were you to offer her your lifelong companionship and love.'

"'Mrs. Howard, you amaze me! Surely you do not appreciate Miss Seymour.'

"'It is because I do appreciate both you and her that I say this. No ordinary man will make Julia Seymour happy; neither will an ordinary woman make you happy. It is because she, as a woman, can measure up to you in ability and character, that I say she could well afford to cast aside her wealth, rather than lose what you might offer her.'

"'But Miss Seymour gave me not the slightest reason to suppose that under any circumstances she would marry me!'

"'Did you expect her to do so?'

"'If she loved me would she have been able to listen to me so calmly and to reply so collectedly?'

"'If she loved you as much as you love her, and found her heart responding to your sentiment, she would. Because a girl blushes, casts down her eyes, and appears embarrassed, you are not to conclude she is in love with you. It may be because she fears you may think that of her; or she is embarrassed because she is uncertain of your meaning; or, perhaps, because she has not the power to understand a great affection. "Perfect love casteth out fear." Julia's calm reception of your statement would, to me, mean that her soul was in the most perfect harmony with yours; that she understood you so completely, and so fully returned your affection that it was impossible for her to feel the least embarrassment.'

"'Mrs. Howard, you put things in a strange way, and have given me much to think about. Pardon me if I leave you now. I must be alone for a time to consider what you have so clearly and simply presented.'

"I came back to the house, well content with my morning's work. At luncheon inquiries were made as to the reason of Mr. Granby's absence. (You had a headache and did not leave your room.) One of the young ladies remarked:

"'We must hold Mrs. Howard responsible for Mr. Granby's non-appearance, for, as I was rambling in the woods this morning I saw them seated near the brook, deep in some serious discussion.'

"'I left him in the grove two hours ago,' I replied. 'You will have to get some one else to account for his absence since then.'"

CHAPTER XXV.

When Mrs. Howard paused, I said:

"I will be perfectly frank with you, Mrs. Howard, although it is not easy for me to talk on this subject."

"I know it, my dear, but remember how much I love you and that I am doing with you as I would like some good woman to do with my daughter, should she ever be similarly situated. I am doing what I think your mother would want done could she know the circumstances."

"Mrs. Howard, you have understood me perfectly, and as things are, I am not sorry you spoke to Mr. Granby as you did, although, had I known your intention, I could never have consented to it.

"Mr. Granby has again spoken to me, saying that perhaps he had not dealt fairly with me in making his statement in such a way that I could not express my feelings without seeming unconventional; he asked me not to suppose that he did this intentionally, and explained to me as he did to you, by saying that he did not wish to ask me to leave my life of ease and wealth to share such a home as he could offer me.

"I did not hesitate to tell him that I fully reciprocated his affection. Furthermore, I told him that although I could not understand what difference it could make as to who owned the money, or whether it came from his family or mine, since all our

interests would be one,—still, his income, which he had named, would procure for me all that I need, or, in any case, intend to spend on myself personally. I then explained to him that I had already decided that all of my income, over and above what my simple wants require, ought to be devoted to benefiting humanity. Therefore, his feeling on the subject of receiving any of my inherited wealth, or of not being able to support me in the style of living which would be mine, were I not married to him, need not stand in the way.

"I still further told him that, since I feel God has given me my means for use in his service, I cannot conscientiously let it pass out of my hands; and hence I must retain control of it for this purpose. Mr. Granby declared this arrangement perfectly satisfactory to him.

"You know, Mrs. Howard, I have tried fashionable life in the highest circles of American society, and care nothing for it, further than that I prize the friendship of genuinely good rich people as much as I do that of any other good people. I know, too, that none whose friendship is of any value will withhold it because I choose a simple mode of life. The home, society and privileges that Mr. Granby's income guarantees, will meet, not only all my needs, but all my desires, so far as such things can. Communion with God,—the companionship of my husband, and the abundant opportunity for intellectual culture that will be mine, will meet every other possible need of my being. So you see, my prospects promise as perfectly happy and complete a life as is possible in this world."

"I am very glad you have come to so satisfactory an understanding," replied Mrs. Howard. "I suppose you have no objection to telling me when you and Mr. Granby expect to be married?"

"We have no definite plans as to time. Mr. Granby says he does not want to hurry me. He does not doubt my affection for him, but thinks it is best for us both to be perfectly sure this is the right thing for us to do. Therefore we have decided to wait two years, and if we are then of the same opinion, he thinks we will be safe in marrying."

"Well, I hope by that time Mr. Granby will find that he ought to take you and your gold, and share it with you as willingly as you share his income with him."

"Yes, I recognize this as his weak point. Yet, realizing his many noble qualities, I am disposed to yield to this honorable, if rather extreme demand of Mr. Granby's.

"I have been thinking how little girls who are not rich know of the troubles of those who are. Now, I have had offers of marriage from those who were very willing to take charge of my money, and in consideration of this, were willing to take me, too; but see the trouble I have had in coming to an understanding with the one man in all the world whom I want to marry! Other girls know nothing about what I have undergone this summer. It was really making me ill."

"The old adage is, 'All is well that ends well,' and I think it will come out all right. In the meantime will you carry out your plan of foreign travel?"

"Yes, Mr. Granby and I talked that over. He

has spent two years abroad; otherwise he would want me to wait until after our marriage and then arrange to spend some time in Europe together. As it is, he thinks he ought to apply himself closely to business and thus prepare to carry out his plans for the future."

"When do you expect to start? The last I heard you say about it, you seemed anxious to go as soon as circumstances would permit."

"As things are turning out, I do not want to leave America until Mr. Gray's mission buildings are well under way. As nearly as I can understand, that will not be before October, or at least a month later than I had intended going."

"Does Esther know about your engagement to Mr. Granby?"

"No. This, together with her and Mr. Gray's affairs, have so troubled me! For a long time I have been looking forward to this vacation, when I could talk everything over with Esther, but you know there has been no opportunity. Then, after the first interview with Mr. Granby, you can imagine how I felt,—and I could not talk to Esther. After the second I did not feel any more disposed to do so."

"Your disinclination to talk of your affairs ought to be respected. Had I known of this second interview I would not thus have intruded myself upon your confidence. Please forgive me, and rest assured I shall repeat nothing you have told me."

"Oh, you do not understand me. I am not sorry you have thus spoken to me; it is really a relief to talk with some one about it, although I should have

shrunk from it had I known what you were going to say when you began."

"I think there are more who sympathize with you than you know."

"Mrs. Howard, has any one else suspected the truth? Since Mr. Granby told you I do not object to your knowing all; but I would rather others did not know of his feeling about money matters, lest they criticise him. We understand each other, and it is not necessary to make explanations to others."

"No, no, Julia, only they have noticed all the time how Mr. Granby has, in a way, seemed to claim you, and that you were unhappy; they have only wondered what was the matter."

"I am sorry I could not better guard my secret. Of course, now it does not matter so much. But for awhile I did wish I could go away from this place without causing too much comment."

"Why, child, who would comment unkindly? Do you not realize that you are among friends? Excuse me, but do you know you have somewhat withdrawn yourself from us all?"

At this the thought of all the late loneliness and trouble overcame me, and I could not longer control myself, but wept unrestrainedly. Mrs. Howard drew me into her lap, caressed me like a child, and told me how much they all loved me. When I grew calm, I said:

"Mrs. Howard, I suppose I am to blame,—but I am all alone in the world; never before have I so wished for my mother. Esther has her mother, her brothers and her sisters; the Granbys have each other; so have Mrs. Rodgers and Kate, while you

have Mr. Howard and the children. Then to make it still worse for me, Mr. Gray has been laying this new claim to Esther. So I felt there was no one who really had time to think about my trouble. Before I came here I could not help knowing that Mr. Granby loved me, and I wanted to talk with Esther about it, but could never find her alone, and I could not interrupt the family conversation by calling her away from them."

"Is it possible that our Julia has been a little jealous?"

"Oh, Mrs. Howard, how can you so misjudge me? I am not in the least envious of one of you. I would not take from you a single joy. Don't you know that? But do you not see how I have wanted some one to talk a little while, just with me? Everybody has been very kind; you have let me right into your circles and made me one of you. The trouble has been that I have had some affairs I was unwilling to let any one know of but Esther; since Mr. Gray came I have not wanted to tell even her. I have always felt that I must tell her everything first, and then I would know what to do next. Not being able to do this, and feeling that I could not come in between any of the friends here, has made me feel somewhat alone."

"No, I know you are not jealous. I said that to get at the root of this separation from us all. Now that I have broken through your reserve, you will not fail to come to me freely, will you? As is often the case, things seem to be taking a shape that will give several of you young people food for thought. But all this was bound to come sooner or later, and

the turn your affairs have taken has made it especially hard for you. But has not Mr. Granby told his sisters of your engagement?"

"Oh, I suppose I am a little nervous and morbid. They are so devoted to their brother, I have feared lest Mrs. Willard and Isabelle might not find it easy to reconcile themselves to my coming into their family life, where, hitherto, they have had Howard's undivided affection and attention. Mr. Granby says it is utterly impossible for such unselfish sisters to feel in that way. But you know how I felt about Mr. Gray! However, I have consented to his telling them to-day; so you can understand how uncertain I feel about what will happen when they return this evening."

"Why, you foolish little girl! What a lot of needless trouble you are giving yourself! Several days ago Mrs. Willard remarked to me how glad she would be, should Howard make you her sister, for you were her ideal of what his wife should be. So, now run back to your room, have a good rest, and be prepared to receive an overwhelming welcome into the Granby family."

I rested awhile, and then hastened to my journal, for I shall probably have little time to write this evening.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Soon after Julia's engagement was made known, Mr. Gray and myself informed our friends of our intended marriage. As Mrs. Bradford had written me that, on account of failing health, she would be obliged to close Fledding, and therefore would no longer require my services as a teacher, there was no reason why we should postpone our marriage. Hence, in order that it might take place before Julia's departure for Europe, we arranged for an early date in September. By the first of October it would be necessary for Mr. Gray to return to New York to look after his work there, and see to the completion of the mission house, as well as to superintend the work of the other buildings, all of which were begun early in August. Since we were not planning an extended wedding tour, we accepted Julia's invitation to spend the intervening time at Sunset Park.

Mr. Granby's family, whose home was in the country, insisted upon Julia's making them a visit, from which place the following letter was written:

W——, September —, 18—.

Dear Esther:—

* * * * * * *

Of course you want to know about Howard's parents and their home. Howard and Isabelle inherit their dignity of manner and general characteristics from their stately, intelligent mother, whom they

also resemble in person. She is an ideal, loving mother, and takes me into her heart as she does her other children.

Except that he is of medium height, Alice Willard bears a stronger likeness to her father than the others do; it is from him she inherits her elegance of manner and fine presence. As you have heard from Mrs. Howard, he is well educated, and has considerable literary ability; he is one of the finest conversationalists I ever met. In your mother and Mrs. Rodgers I saw and felt what a mother could be, but I am now learning something of what it is to have a father. I am as much at home in his house, and believe he gives me as large a place in his heart, as if I had been born here.

Ernest, Howard's only brother, has one of the most beautiful Christian characters I ever knew. He has been a sufferer since early childhood; possessed of powers that would have enabled him to do great things had he grown to manhood in health and vigor, he has been compelled to spend his young life in a sick room. Here he has so developed his naturally patient disposition, and so studied the deep things of God, that it is an inspiration to know him. He has opened up the Scriptures to my mind, and taught me more of what God is like, than all the ministers I have ever heard, and all the teachers I have ever had. His large brown eyes seem to be ever looking out and beyond, into things too great to be spoken of. From unseen sources he draws supplies of wisdom and grace, until he himself has become like an inexhaustible spring of fresh and living water.

Mr. and Mrs. Granby have taken great pains with his education, and so far from having become a mystic, or one who gives attention to nothing outside of religious matters, he is interested in all the events of the times. Ernest says that the more he learns of what is going on in the world, the more he is interested in the relations of the Kingdom of God to the condition and conduct of men.

Before coming here Howard intimated to me that I would better not bring Parsons with me, as his mother and sisters would probably prefer doing for me all that I would be likely to need, and that room at the farm-house was limited. How I laughed at him, and assured him that I had not forgotten the lessons learned at Fledding!

I find the farm-house delightful. It was built by Howard's grandfather a few years before he died. It is a large, two-storied stone house, with deep windows and large, pleasant rooms.

My room is upstairs and over the parlor. It is redolent with the odor of dried rose leaves and of other sweet-scented blossoms. Everything in the room, while very simple, is cozy and restful; the white muslin window curtains and white bed draperies giving a fresh and dainty appearance to the room.

The entire house is furnished in a simple, but comfortable and tasteful manner. The only really valuable articles it contains, aside from the rare old china and silverware with which the table is set, and which has been in the family for generations, are a number of fine family portraits of past and present generations, and some good oil paintings.

These are scattered through the different rooms, and some are excellent works of art, representing the collections of more than one lifetime. Of books there is no lack, for there are bookcases or shelves in every room in the house, not excepting the kitchen. One side of Ernest's room, which adjoins the parlor, is occupied by shelves filled with well-chosen books.

The little lawn in front of the house is shaded by fine old trees under which the family spends considerable time on warm days. Within a five minutes' walk, and across a tiny, picturesque brook of the clearest water, is a quaint old country church, surrounded by a grove of majestic elms, under whose shade father Granby played when a child.

I need not tell you that I am enjoying myself with these refined, highly spiritual people, nor what a dear sister Isabelle is. I should be hard to please were I not satisfied with them, and with the receptions they have given me.

* * * * * * *

As ever, your loving

JULIA.

A letter from Mrs. Granby to Mrs. Howard, written shortly after this, expresses the delight the family felt at the choice made by her son. In this letter she said: "Julia came to us as one of our own, at once taking her place, and seeming as much at home with us as if she only had returned after a short absence. I cannot realize that I have not always known her and that she has not always been my child. Indeed, Howard says she has."

After Julia's return to New York, Mr. Gray and myself reached the city in time to spend a few days at the hotel with her before her departure, our home not yet being ready for occupancy. Here I also met Mr. and Mrs. Albert Cooper, who were on their way to the Continent on their wedding trip. We were most agreeably surprised to find in Mr. Cooper a gentleman of easy and rather prepossessing manners. He promises to become an intelligent and successful business man; and his frank and honest face indicates a man of principle and honor.

From Julia I learned that Mr. Cooper's father had died the preceding February, leaving him the bulk of his large property after providing for his wife and two daughters. The elder daughter had married an English officer a short time before her father's death, and was in Europe when it occurred.

It seems, as I have since learned, that the father felt great satisfaction in Albert's intimacy with Julia, and although somewhat impatient with what he termed his son's slowness in bringing things to a climax, he was always hopeful of the outcome. Albert thought it best to keep his own council and allow matters to take their course. With this in view, he earnestly applied himself to his law studies, and kept up his acquaintance with Julia and Miss Case, and such friends of theirs as he chanced to meet, always making the best of his opportunities for self-improvement.

After his father's death, although it was evident to himself as well as others that he would never succeed as a lawyer, he followed the advice of his new friends, and determined to finish his course of study,

because of the help it would be to him in the management of his large property.

Early in the summer, after accomplishing this, he greatly astonished and displeased his sisters by announcing to them his engagement to Miss Case. Even his mother roused herself from her indolent indifference sufficiently to express her disapproval of his marriage with a penniless school-teacher; she had supposed he was going to marry Miss Seymour. Why had he not done so? Finding her indignant remonstrances of no avail, she settled down again into her usual state of apathy, while his sisters declared they would never recognize his intended wife as a member of their family. Albert, in his slow, quiet way, informed them that they would probably have no opportunity to do so, as he did not care to have so cultured a lady as Miss Case compelled to associate with women so lacking in intelligence and refinement as his sisters.

On her part, Miss Case did not consider it necessary to inform her uncle and aunts of her plans. Therefore, when they heard of her marriage to a man much wealthier than even her rich aunt, they showered congratulations upon her, reproaching her for not letting them know of it, so they might have arranged for her wedding in the home of her relatives. They now insisted that she and her husband should come to visit them before their departure for Europe. Mrs. Cooper replied briefly, stating that Mr. Cooper's plans were such that it would not be convenient to accept their invitation.

After Julia, Mrs. Rodgers and the Coopers left New York, Mr. Gray and myself were fully occupied

in the work with which our hearts and hands were filled.

Until I recently read these later entries in Julia's journal, I did not know of her thoughtful and generous provision for my comfort and welfare. Mr. Gray, faithful to his promise, had never mentioned it to me. Neither had I the least idea of the trouble Julia felt over my probable marriage with Mr. Gray; nor of her difficulty in securing opportunities for confidential conversations with me. I did not suspect her need of sympathy and counsel, for I felt that she had developed into a capable woman, whom I was no longer competent to guide and advise; she had become my companion rather than my pupil. I found in her heights and depths of spiritual power, which caused me instinctively to feel like sitting at her feet to receive benefit and instruction. Then, too, the certainty I felt of the wisdom of whatever course she might pursue, prevented my thinking of her continuing to consult me on matters closely related to herself. But Julia never realized all this, and construed my inability always to go on counseling and directing her, into a lack of opportunity to secure my undivided attention.

Before I met Mr. Granby I had discovered that he had won Julia's heart, and it was with no small anxiety that I awaited the outcome of their acquaintance. After I knew him I could not tolerate the thought that two people so evidently fitted for each other, should fail in fulfilling what, to all appearances, was their destiny. However, I never presumed upon broaching the subject to Julia.

As Julia elsewhere remarks in her journal, this

clinging to her friends, and relying upon their judgment, indicated a lack of faith in God. By being deprived of the human support she had so depended upon, she learned to take a firmer hold upon the Rock of Ages, and to place all her dependence upon Him. Since that time, she claims to have looked more entirely to her Lord and Savior as the source of all help, wisdom, love and sympathy; and to have learned to appeal to the "Mighty Counselor" in her times of need.

Julia and Mrs. Rodgers spent two years abroad. Time and space do not permit my giving her delightful, helpful letters written to me during those two years. Suffice it to say that she shared with me every beautiful scene, every helpful experience, every addition to her fund of knowledge. In her whole busy life, Julia was never known to forget a friend; in the midst of her travels and enjoyment of things new and strange, her thoughts were full of interest and plans for those she loved. The following is copied from her journal, written while crossing the Atlantic on her way to Europe:

October —, 18—.—

I am very happy to-day. Mr. and Mrs. Cooper have been telling me of their plans. In the midst of the conversation, Mr. Cooper broke out with:

"Miss Seymour, I want to tell you something! Mrs. Cooper and I have been talking things over, and we intend to follow your example and begin life by always first considering God's will with reference to our plans. We believe this to be not only right and wise, but a debt we owe for all the good you

have done us, and for the influence of your Christian example."

"Yes," added Mrs. Cooper, "we see the advantage of beginning right, if we hope to succeed. I have noticed quite a number of middle-aged people who seem to be anxious to lead an out and out, thorough Christian life, but who in past years have allowed themselves to become so entangled in business, and in social and family matters, that it seems almost impossible to make a change without uprooting and overturning their whole lives. Also, aside from the difficulty they find in beginning to do new things in a new way, they encounter serious and determined opposition from their families and friends. We see that if we begin right we shall avoid such complications and trouble."

"We have been wondering," continued Mr. Cooper, "whether you would care to sell your New York residence just as it is, furniture and all. You remember you took me over the house when I visited you last winter. I was much pleased with the place."

"The fact is," continued Mrs. Cooper, "we intend to carry out your theory, developed the winter you and Mrs. Rodgers occupied the house. We want to show the possibility of rich people living in a happy, reasonable way in a beautiful home, and at the same time making it a means of giving pleasure and help to all within our reach. Your stay in the city was too short to have the general and permanent effect we believe possible."

"I am very glad to hear you say this," I replied. "I have my hands too full to do all I see needs to be

done. I had to let go of something. Therefore, I gave up trying to mould fashionable life that I might devote more time to helping people who desire to be respectable, but who are unable to overcome their misfortunes without assistance. Then, too, since I have not had a college education, I feel that I ought, and must, supplement what I have received by travel and private study. I shall be glad to see you take up this work, for I believe you are well adapted to make a success of it."

"While my income is large," continued Mr. Cooper, "and will enable us to do a great deal that will give us,—and we hope many others,—much pleasure, yet we must of necessity limit out operations for making people better and happier; so we will endeavor to coöperate with you by taking up some lines of work for which you have no time."

But, oh, I cannot tell how much joy it gave me to find that anything in my life or example has led Mr. and Mrs. Cooper to the resolve they expressed. If I could only exert such an influence over more people I would not so much regret my own limitations of time and ability, for money does not enable one to do all that I desire to do. In this case I feel that through the Coopers I am being allowed to carry on a work that lies very near my heart. So much energy and talent are being wasted by the society people of our great cities. Oh, for more people like Mr. and Mrs. Cooper, who will make it their business to show there is something better than a ceaseless round of fashionable frivolity; who will show to what true and noble uses beautiful homes,

and all other beautiful things God has given us, can be put!

This morning Mrs. Cooper said to me: "Miss Seymour, we have no intention of burying ourselves in solemn seriousness; we expect to be very much alive to all rational, wholesome enjoyments. Indeed, we intend to gather about us very much the same class of people as those who, with such evident pleasure and profit, used to frequent the house when you lived there. In fact, we intend to offer something rarer, more desirable and more enjoyable, than is to be found in the homes of the merely wealthy."

"And you will find yourself a part of a very small but excellent company of people, who, occupying the first positions in the city, are laboring, as they can, towards the same end as yourselves, and by whom you will be gladly welcomed," I replied.

Unprepossessing as was his first appearance, Albert Cooper was well worth saving; he hardly seems the same person as the shy, awkward, uncertain boy, who made his first visit to Sunset Park over two years ago, and listened with such amazement to my business ideas. He often speaks of that time, and declares that whatever there is about him that is worthy he owes to the efforts of his wife and myself, and that we have made a man of him. Yet it seemed such a little thing simply to be kind to him, to sympathize with his desires, and to encourage his attempts to reach a higher plane of life. He is now an earnest Christian gentleman.

* * * * * * *

After spending two years abroad, Julia returned

to America and was married to Mr. Granby at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cooper. As they were both desirous of seeing South America, Mr. and Mrs. Granby went there on their wedding tour, returning the following spring. At this time Parsons was married to a merchant who owned a small store in a little town in the west. Finding that Parsons hoped they might be so prosperous as to enable her, in a year or two, to open a millinery shop in connection with her husband's store, Julia furnished the means to do so at once, much to the delight of the grateful couple.

During Julia's absence from America, many changes had taken place, among which was the marriage of my brother Richard and Miss Kate Holmes. Shortly after Mr. and Mrs. Granby's return from South America, his sister Isabelle was married to my brother Edward, thus adding another link to the chain of affection between the two families. Edward continued to act as agent for Mrs. Granby, and had worked up quite a law practice. His experience as agent, also, led him about this time to make a beginning as a real estate dealer, in which business he has proved successful. When Miss Kate Holmes resigned her position as Julia's special secretary, Miss Nellie Millburn took her place.

CHAPTER XXVII.

From Julia's journal I learn that after their marriage, Mr. Granby told her that from the time he first met her at the temperance meeting, five years before, he began to look forward to the fitting up of a home. Although he never allowed himself to hope that she would share it with him, yet he was all the time conscious that, as his plans progressed, he had her in his mind, and in everything studied what her tastes and wishes might be. Accordingly, he purchased a sightly place on which he intended to build eventually. It commanded a fine view, was but a few miles from the city, and accessible by convenient trains.

Much to the regret of his New England friends and constituents, Mr. Granby withdrew from political life, believing that by so doing he could be more useful and influential in his work of reform. But when he decided to leave Boston and begin the practice of law in the city of New York, his friends were still more disappointed. However, he considered that his prospects for success, and the opportunities for working along his chosen lines would be greater in New York than elsewhere. Moreover, Julia preferred New York, inasmuch as she was sufficiently acquainted with the possibilities and needs of the city to enable her to begin, at once, to coöperate with others interested in the public good. Besides, most of her acquaintances and friends

lived in that city, and she naturally felt more at home there.

Mr. Granby speedily established himself in his new field, and at once took his place among the foremost men of his profession.

Notwithstanding the many responsibilities she was bearing, Julia still found time to meet her friends socially, and ere long, the people who had considered her city residence so delightful, found her suburban home equally attractive. I take from her journal the following entry, made in the early fall after her marriage.

"I do so much enjoy this lovely home,—even more than I did Sunset Park. That was a delightful experience, but there was no one to enjoy it with me. Dear Mrs. Rodgers' presence and love made it a real home; yet it was mine and not hers. Now, my every home joy is also Howard's, and everything about it is not mine, but ours, and a sweet, homelike place it is.

"What I most enjoy is the beautiful scenery. The elevation of ground upon which the house is built gives us a fine view of the river, two miles away to the east, and of the country beyond it. On the other side the sweep of hill, plain, valley and sky, gratifies my love of grandeur and sublimity.

"The ample grounds, with the magnificent great trees, the well kept and tastefully arranged flower garden, and the wide expanse of country, give a sense of spaciousness, freedom and freshness that furnish all the delights of rural life, while our proximity to the city gives us all the conveniences of city life.

"Our home overlooks the pretty, busy village at the foot of the hill, from which we are far enough away to escape the sound of traffic and travel, but near enough to enable us to look down upon the pretty cottages, tiny green lawns, the churches and school-buildings, with here and there a more pretentious dwelling, all of which makes us feel the neighborhood of people, and prevents any loneliness we might otherwise experience.

"I think we have an ideal house. Everything is on a much smaller scale and in a simpler style than in the New York residence, but there is no lack of grace and refinement in the taste with which our handsome parlor, pleasant dining-room and really beautiful library are fitted up. Those whom we have been privileged to entertain have found our guest rooms comfortable, pleasant and airy.

"As many months as I have lived here, I still feel a start of surprise whenever I pass out upon any of the many verandas with which our house is surrounded. I am sure no artist could give so much delight as the varied views which the windows of our different rooms afford. When planning and building the house, Howard made an especial study of this, as well as of the arrangement of the verandas.

"Yes, I am sure ours is the dearest home in the world. I would not exchange it for the most palatial residence I ever saw. There is nothing about it I could wish different.

* * * * * * *

"One afternoon, a few weeks ago, Mrs. Bristol visited here and greatly amused me by remarking in some surprise:

" 'I do not know but you look as pretty in your simple white muslin home dresses as you used to in lace and welvet!' "

The only subject on which Mr. and Mrs. Granby seriously differed was that of her going beyond her strength in carrying on her philanthropic work. Once, when Mr. Gray was away, and having the leisure to do so, I spent an evening at the Granbys'. Mrs. Rodgers was also there. Mr. Granby came in a few minutes before dinner, and when we were seated at the table he said to his wife, "What have you been doing all day, my dear?" She answered:

"I went to the city, attended to some business there, and then went over to Esther's and brought her home with me."

"Well, I thought you had a great deal on hand. About eleven o'clock this morning I had occasion to drive to —— street, and there I saw you alight from a car and hasten down —— street. Two hours later I was at ——, and again saw you descend from the cars and pass upstairs."

"Is that so? I did not see you!"

"No, I think you were in too great a hurry to see any one. About four o'clock I saw you scurrying down Broadway as if afraid you would miss the last train for home. Happening to know you were busy every moment this morning before breakfast, and that you had a hard day's work yesterday going over business matters with Thurston, I concluded it was time for me to know how many hours constitute a day's work for my wife."

Julia colored, hesitated, and then replied:

"I could not help it, Howard. I had promised personally to look after two poor families in the neighborhood where you first saw me; I also had to meet a committee of which I am chairman. The appointment was for one o'clock, and I hurried because I was late. That over, I took luncheon and went down Broadway to see two young men concerning some work connected with the Association's reading-rooms."

"Where next?"

"To see Esther and bring her home with me. Are you not glad?"

Mr. Granby turned to me with a smile, saying:

"You see, she wants to change the subject." Then turning to her he continued:

"But, Julia, why did you not postpone part of this work until to-morrow? And I would like to know where you took luncheon."

Julia looked troubled, and as if she would like to avoid this question, as she answered:

"To-morrow Nellie Millburn will spend the day with me."

"Indeed! Then another day will be given to accounts and reports. But where did you lunch?"

"Oh, Howard, why do you ask so many unnecessary questions?"

"But where?"

"I could not help it! I did not get out of the committee meeting until after three o'clock; so I ran into ——, ordered my luncheon, and had barely time to run down Broadway, go to see Esther and catch the train by which I wished to come home."

"Doughnuts and coffee!"

"I wanted nothing more; and you know that there they serve their customers quickly."

"You seem quite familiar with the place, so I judge this is not your first visit there. But why did you not take a carriage instead of walking or going on the street car?"

"Oh, Howard, you know that the streets, leading to the place where you first saw me, are so blocked by traffic that a carriage cannot get through so quickly as the cars; and I walked down Broadway because I had several little errands to attend to; so it was not worth while to take a carriage."

"Well, my dear, I know you enjoy this work, and I am glad to have you do so much of it as is reasonable. But really, I must object to your thus crowding your life until these activities become positive toil. I cannot have you overdoing in this way."

"I am glad to hear you say so," joined in Mrs. Rodgers. "Julia gives herself no time to rest. True, she does not deny herself the pleasure of spending her time with you when you are at leisure to be here; but the moment you leave the house she has something on hand which demands her immediate attention.

"Some one, with sufficient influence to bring about the desired effect, should have looked after this matter long ago. Even with her perfect health and fine constitution, Julia cannot endure such constant occupation. But I must confess that I fail to persuade her to do what she is able, and leave the rest for some one else."

"I would like to know who would have looked

after those sick, starving children to-day, if I had not done so. I have found that most people leave such work for 'some one else.' And the committee meeting had been twice postponed because neither time could I be present," returned Julia, with decided emphasis.

"There, you see how it is," continued good, motherly Mrs. Rodgers. "The girl loads herself down with work, and then others force her into the presidency and secretaryship of I do not know how many committees and organizations."

By this time Julia looked not only embarrassed, but somewhat vexed. But when Mr. Granby turned to her with the peculiar smile he never gave to any one else, the fire died out of her eyes and the unusual color left her cheeks, as she returned his smile.

Julia told me afterwards that when they talked it over the next day, Mr. Granby helped her plan a way whereby so much of her time would not be required as to leave her no leisure for rest. This, however, did not end the difficulty, for, like many other young people who enjoy exceptional health and strength, Julia found it difficult to realize that she could overdraw upon these blessings. Hence, these discussions were frequently renewed and followed by more carefulness, until some emergency or accumulation of work drew her into committing the same indiscretion.

When Julia had been married a little over two years, she wrote in her journal:

"I wonder how much more life holds for me! For the last two years it has seemed as if my cup of

happiness could contain no more; but what shall I say of the unbounded joy I feel as I clasp my beautiful boy in my arms? Sometimes it seems as if my heart would burst with gladness. He has his father's great dark eyes, and is so perfectly well—has never had an ailing moment, and he is a month old to-day. I wonder how Howard can bear to be away from him a moment! Yet I know he feels as deeply as I do, although he does not express himself in the torrent of words I cannot repress. Oh, my beautiful, beautiful boy!

"I can now sympathize with Esther in her tenderness for her delicate, fairy-like, little three-year-old daughter. But Esther has a constant fear lest her frail little snowdrop, whom in my honor she calls Julia, shall not long grace the earth. Oh, how could I live if I thought my boy would be taken from me? But hush,—I must not say that. As Esther tells me, 'God knows best,' and He makes no mistakes; and yet, what should I do? I must pray for grace to bear my joy, and remain submissive and trustful in the knowledge that my boy's highest good is in the Heavenly Father's hands.

"I wanted to name our boy Howard, but his father insisted on naming him Seymour.

"Mrs. Rodgers will be in soon, and as she does not like to have me write, I must stop. But I had to give expression to what I feel."

A year before this, at Julia's earnest request, Mrs. Rodgers had come to live with her. She claimed the right to have Mrs. Rodgers with her a part of the time, instead of her remaining always with Mrs. Kate Berkely.

When her baby was two months old Julia made the following entry in her journal:

"To-day our son was baptized, and for the first time I have felt that I could really give him up to God for life or for death,—for anything that my Heavenly Father's love should decree. With this, great peace and quietness have come into my soul. I no longer fear what may be, for I know that all will be well.

"I love my boy more now than I could have understood even a month ago, for this deep, strong, unmeasured love seems to take hold upon eternal things. I can express it in no other way,—and there is nothing in this affection that is not in perfect harmony with my loving God supremely. The wild idolatry I felt a month ago, is gone,—and oh, the sweetness of the love that has taken its place!

"I feel that this child belongs to God, but has been sent to bless my life for so long a time as it shall please the Father to leave him with me. Should he be removed to Heaven before myself, the blessing he has brought me must remain, and the hope of re-union hereafter makes Heaven a brighter prospect, whether my child or I shall first reach its shores. I have wonderful peace and rest."

Some months after this, one day when Julia was at my home, looking so well and happy, I gave expression to a thought that flashed through my mind, saying:

"Julia, have you ever thought of the possibility of your being taken to Heaven suddenly and unex-

pectedly? Have you thought of the advisability of having everything in order in case such a thing should occur?"

"Oh, yes," she replied, brightly, "soon after Seymour was baptized Howard spoke of it, and everything is ready. But I hope to live long enough to be my own administrator as far as my property is concerned, and during my life to bestow most of it where I would like to have it go."

I again copy from the journal:

"Yesterday Seymour was two years old. Mrs. Cooper came to see us, bringing her two boys. She also has a little daughter a few months old. Albert, the eldest, is four years old, and is much like his mother. He is a slight, nervous child, and quivers with excitement, while the color comes and goes in his face just as it does in hers; he is constantly in motion. This seems to annoy his mother, who remarked with considerable satisfaction:

" 'Ernest is not a bit like Albert. He is so quiet you would never know there was a child in the house. Isn't he fair?'

" 'Yes,' I replied, 'very fair.'

"I was glad she asked the question in such a form, for I think Albert, with his dark eyes and active mind and body, much the more interesting child. Little Ernest is two years old, and has the whitest hair I ever saw,—soft and fine as silk,—so white one can hardly distinguish the line where it separates from his extremely fair face; his cheeks are pink with health, and he has his father's placid blue eyes, slow movements and contented disposi-

tion. He is a great contrast to Seymour, who is brown as a berry, with very dark hair and eyes, and his cheeks are as red as roses. Seymour, while not a nervous child, is very active, and made great exertions to induce Ernest to join him in play with his toys. But Ernest only stared at him with wide-open eyes and mouth, and seemed to hear nothing. When his mother stood him on his feet he remained standing just where she placed him, his only movement being to put into his mouth the piece of cake he was holding. Mrs. Cooper looked at him with great complacency, and I knew she was contrasting him with my dark-eyed laddie, giving the favor to her own plump, blue-eyed boy. I suppose his quiet nature is restful to one of her intense, active temperament. But I am well content with my sturdy rogue, who is just now coaxing me to play riding in the cars with him."

Later, Julia wrote in her journal:

"For the past few days my heart has been so full of pain I have been unable to write. The other morning we received a telegram saying, 'The angels came last night and took our little Julia away. Can you come to us?' Hardly realizing what I did, I accompanied Howard and Mrs. Rodgers to Esther's home. 'Oh,' I thought, 'what shall I say to Esther? How can I bear this trouble that has come to her?' Thus trying to compose my thoughts and prepare to be of some comfort to our stricken friends, I entered her room. Surely, in passing, the angels must have touched the bereaved mother, for I never saw such calm, peaceful, holy submission as was in Esther's face. I forgot all and

just rushed into her arms. Instead of comforting her she turned comforter to me.

"'Why, child,' she said, 'why do you look so white and terror-stricken? Have you forgotten that my little blossom is safe with Jesus, never more to suffer pain and sickness?'

"'Oh, Esther,' I gasped, 'that your child should be taken! I could endure it were it some other; but how can I bear to have you so bereft?'

"This side of heaven I shall never see anything sweeter than the smile with which Esther turned to me, saying:

"'Julia, I am not bereft; my child still lives, is still mine, mine eternally. I saw something last week that I could not have borne had it come to me. A beautiful girl, who had drifted into a bad life, returned to her mother only in time to die, leaving no hope of her hereafter. I would have mourned all my life had my child lived and become like that, and then died without manifesting the least desire for anything better than her life had been; turning in bitterness from all who tried to direct her thoughts to eternal things,—only faintly answering:

"' "I do not care for these things now,—I did when I was a little girl,—but now I do not enjoy being with good people, so how can I care for heaven?" With these words she passed out into the beyond.

"'How can I be thankful enough that the dark, bad part of this world has never touched my darling, but that I have given her back to God as pure as when He sent her to me!'

"And I was comforted. I do not understand why, but I have never found it an easy thing to be willing that trouble should touch Esther. At this point I have failed hitherto. There is more that I need to have God do for me."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Seymour was three years old when Julia's second son was born. Of this she wrote in her journal:

"And they say this sweet, blue-eyed boy looks like me! Be that as it may, he is a most lovable child. Something about him so appeals to my tenderest affection that I can hardly endure to have him out of my sight for a moment. There must be a great deal of room in a mother's heart. It used to seem to me that Seymour so filled mine that I never could give another child so much love as I did him; but I love this fair-faced boy, with hair like sunshine, just as much. Yet he does not seem to reach down so deep into my being, and take hold upon my very life, as my first-born does. Strange to say, this child seems to have taken a stronger hold upon his father than even Seymour. We were talking of the mystery of these things with Mrs. Rodgers, and she says it is nothing unusual; for while we do not love one child more than another, yet the special needs of our natures often find a more pronounced response from one than from the others; hence we feel a stronger sympathy with each other.

"We have named this son Howard."

A year later I was spending the day with Julia, when Mrs. Phillips called. In the course of conversation she said:

"Really, Mrs. Granby, I wonder how you can be willing to confine yourself so closely to domestic affairs. You keep but two servants besides that

little twelve-year-old girl who helps to look after the children. Do you think it right thus to narrow your life?"

"I do not understand you," returned Julia. "In what way do my home duties seem to narrow my life?"

"Why, even with your laundry work done out of the house,—with so few servants, you must be left with many household duties to look after. It seems, too, that you take most of the care of your children. All this must leave you very little time to enjoy yourself."

"Oh, but I enjoy looking after our home; and the pleasure of taking care of my children I could never give up to a hired nurse. So far from considering this work narrowing, I feel that nothing has so deepened my enjoyment of life, and so broadened my sympathies, as my boys.

"Moreover, nothing ever so stimulated me to effort,—I never so felt the necessity for spiritual culture, mental development, and home refinement, as since I became the mother of these children. I find my resources taxed to the utmost since they are here to be influenced by my life, and trained by my teaching.

"And this is not all, for there is more to be considered than my own comfort, happiness and benefit. I want to be a comfort to them. When they are men I want their sweetest memories to cluster around myself. I want the home influence for good to follow them as long as they live."

"But you are kept at home so closely; you have so little time to go out in society."

"I am afraid I have little sympathy with women who complain on that account. I do not understand them. For my part, I enjoy the companionship of my husband and children more than any I can find outside my home. I cannot see where the dragging down and narrowing, so often complained of, are to be found."

"But do you not think the outside world has some claim upon you?"

"Certainly, and I conscientiously try to meet this claim. Indeed, I go out into society as much now as I did during the first two years of my married life."

"And are you able to give as much time as formerly to charitable and religious work, for which you always have had such a passion?"

"I have not been obliged to give up any of my personal work among the poor. Since my own boys came to bless my life, and to teach me more of the needs of childhood and the yearnings of motherhood, my sympathy with unfortunate, helpless children, and toiling, troubled, suffering mothers, is greatly quickened and intensified. I find I can do more really helpful work in less time and with less outlay of effort than formerly.

"To our work of general philanthropy Miss Millburn has proved herself especially well adapted. Then Mr. Granby's sister, Mrs. Edward Berkely, is interested in all these things, and we plan and work together, thus accomplishing more than we could working separately. Mr. Granby is a tower of strength to me. His wide experience, and power of grasping a situation quickly, enable him to help me

greatly in simplifying the work, and thus making the most of time and opportunity."

"I suppose Mrs. Rodgers is a great help to you?"

"Oh, it almost seems as if I could not do without her. She is like a mother to us. Indeed, at her own request the children call her grandmamma, and she loves them as much as if they were her grandchildren.

"Yes, when it is necessary for me to be away from home I feel no anxiety about the boys. But I sometimes grudge the time I must spend away from my darlings."

"Well, I half believe you are right, and that you are really getting more out of life than many of us who are making such a constant study of reducing to a minimum our home cares, so that we may have more time for our fashionable society life.

"Then, too, I notice that many people seem to be giving more attention to questions relating to society, and are beginning to express much the same opinions as you have always held. Only, you know, so many have accustomed themselves to a certain mode of living, and there seems no way nor place to make a change."

"Yes, I can see how that is; but if we only can influence young people, who are just beginning life, to start right, we shall accomplish a great deal."

"Even then, they so often begin life hampered by plans which their parents have made for them, that it is difficult to overcome their unfavorable circumstances and environments. Do you remember that Miss Hamilton you met one evening at Mrs. Bris-

tol's, several years ago, and who was so interested in that remarkable discussion?"

"Yes, and I have often wondered as to her whereabouts. I liked her very much."

"Oh, the family spent a great deal of time abroad. They have returned to America, and a few months ago Miss Hamilton was married to Mr. Francis, the young millionaire. It seems she has some unconventional ideas of life, with which her husband sympathizes. But her father-in-law, the elder Mr. Francis, simply forbade any innovations, and declared he would have no following after the Granbys and Coopers. They say there has been considerable family trouble, but it looks as if the father had triumphed, for the young people are settled in a brown stone front, and are going the usual rounds of fashionable life."

"I am sorry for them," said Julia, "but if they are in earnest they will find their way out of this labyrinth."

"I suppose so, but you see, it is not easy for every one to do as you have done,—your case has been quite exceptional."

"Yes, I know things have been comparatively easy for me. I have often wondered why I have so little trouble."

All this while I had been listening, but now I said:

"I have heard Mrs. Rodgers remark that it is because you have been so sincerely intent upon knowing and doing the will of God."

"But wherein has young Mrs. Francis failed, that she should have such trouble?"

"I know nothing about her beyond what I have heard from you. One thing, however, is certain. Had she and her husband considered everything as carefully before they were married, as did Mr. and Mrs. Granby, she would have found out in what her connection with the Francis family was likely to involve her, and knowing this, if she chose to enter the family, she would have no cause of complaint or dissatisfaction concerning conditions which she previously understood."

"Yes, that is true, and this should be a warning to other young people who wish to carry out their convictions."

After Mrs. Phillips' departure I said to Julia:

"I think Mrs. Phillips is right about a growing interest in questions relating to social life, and also in the sort of work in which you are so much engaged. I believe that your example, and that of others like you, is bearing abundant and good fruit, proving in a most satisfactory way the truth of the promise, 'Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many days.'"

A few days afterward Mrs. Bristol came to see Julia, and, as usual, rallied her upon what she was pleased to call her eccentric mode of life, and exclaimed:

"Really, I do not believe you have been to a ball since you joined the Methodists!"

"When I came to spend the winter with you," answered Julia, "I was already in accord with Methodist doctrine, and approved of most of the rules of that church, but was uncertain whether I could sanction its restrictions concerning amusements, and

thought it dishonorable to join a church to the rules of which I could not assent. My first season in New York convinced me that the Methodists had taken the correct position on the subject of amusements.

"For these reasons, before going abroad, I joined the little church at Hampton, of which I remained a member until I came here, when I presented my letter of membership and joined the church in the village near us."

"Well, even if I did not dance myself," said Mrs. Bristol, "I would prefer a more liberal church than the Methodist. Why does it make such rules when other churches, as remarkable for their piety, do not presume to interfere with the freedom of their members?"

"There may be few churches besides the Methodist that have such rules, but I assure you that we are not the only people who do not approve of such amusements. In New York, and when traveling, I have met many who were members of other churches. I recall acquaintances who are among the most earnest workers in these churches, who take the same position on the subject of amusements that I do. I have heard of a bishop in the Episcopal Church who refused to lay hands upon candidates for confirmation if they indulged in dancing. You see, this is not a peculiarity of Methodist people."

"Yes, the clergyman now preaching in our church is talking on this line, but he does not presume to enforce his views among his people."

"Well, if I, and others, prefer to belong to a church

that is agreed upon this matter of amusements, why should we not have the privilege of doing so? By this we interfere with the privileges of no one, for those who differ from us in opinion are at liberty to go elsewhere. I must confess I have very little respect for those who join our church, knowing the rules and preferences of our people, and then attempt to change those rules, or failing that, break them. It seems to me a serious infringement upon the rights of others."

"What will you do when your boys grow up and want to dance?"

"Very early, we began a course of training with our children, calculated to instill such principles as will cause them to feel that the spirit of the ball-room is not in harmony with that of Christianity.

"In the second place, we intend to give them such education and culture as will so develop their character and intellect, and so inspire them with lofty ideals, that not only will they have no taste for these light and questionable amusements, but will find them so thoroughly unsatisfactory as entertainments, that they will consider nothing so irksome as the necessity,—could there be one,—of participating in them.

"In the third place, when our children are old enough to reason, we shall explain to them our objections to these things.

"With divine direction and help, for which we daily pray, we believe that by such a course we shall see our boys grow up into manhood not dependent upon such trivialities for their enjoyment.

"All this training and education includes a preparation of mind and heart that is intended to lead them, early, to take hold upon things that are eternal. I would not like to spend all this time fitting them simply to live a few years in this world, and neglect their interests in the world where they are to spend the cycles of eternity."

"Perhaps, however, after all you can do, they may be like you, and want to find out for themselves whether these things are objectionable."

"Mr. Granby comes of old Puritan stock. As far back as the family history is known, there is no record of any one who found the ball-room, and its associate places of amusements, attractive. We hope our children have inherited this quality.

"As for myself, you must remember that my case was somewhat peculiar. Before I was ten years old I had been taught certain principles that made me ready to do whatever was shown to be right. Until I met Mrs. Gray at Fledding I received no further directly moral or religious instruction. Even after that, my life was so isolated, that, had any one presented such questions relating to my duty to the outside world, I could not have understood them.

"Therefore, when I reached Sunset Park, I was as inexperienced and ignorant as if I had just descended from one of the planets. The question soon came before me, but people so differed in opinion on the subject, and those who objected to these amusements gave such unsatisfactory reasons for doing so, that I decided to investigate for myself.

"Had any one told me what I can now explain, and what you heard me talk of when I was in your

home, I should never have doubted a moment that the ball-room held nothing I needed or desired.

"Anxious not to fail in my duty to society and the world at large, I came to New York for a season of fashionable life. As you know, I was not long in learning that such a life did not meet my ideas of the way in which I ought to spend my time and strength."

"But did Mrs. Rodgers never explain what you say you are going to explain to your boys?"

"I must again remind you of my peculiar position."

"Well, Mrs. Granby, we shall expect your sons to grow up very serious, sedate young men. I suppose that even now they never laugh nor get into mischief."

"Oh, don't think for a moment that they do not have plenty of fun! It is well we have no near neighbors, or they might feel themselves scandalized by witnessing our frolics. But our amusements are of such a character that, many times, when in the midst of them, Mr. Granby says:

"'See, it is the boys' bedtime, let us have prayers.'

"Calling the household together, we then ask our Heavenly Father's blessing upon us all, and even upon our pastimes.

"I fancy, Mrs. Bristol, few ball-room guests are in a frame of mind that would enable them, at a moment's notice, to cease dancing, kneel down and ask God's blessing upon themselves and what they were engaged in a moment before. Or, imagine them coming home at four o'clock in the morning,

calling the household together to give thanks to God for the blessings and enjoyments of their lives, and then going to their rooms to sleep until it is time to prepare for the next entertainment."

"I am glad your children are so proper and satisfactory in their behavior."

"You may be sure they are not model children. They have such streaks of badness! But do you not see that is one of the strongest reasons why we should most earnestly, and persistently, pursue the course of which I have told you? We are obliged to do it if we would keep our children from being ruined at the very beginning."

"My! What dreadful things do they do?"

"Seymour is a very determined, positive child, so bent on having his own way that he sometimes disobeys our most emphatic commands. Even little Howard sometimes taxes our patience to the utmost of endurance. He is intense and excitable, becoming so absorbed in whatever interests or pleases him, that sometimes we have to use really severe measures to make him understand that he must think of others and remember to obey.

"Mrs. Rodgers laughs, and says he is just like I was when I was so busy with all sorts of work. When Mr. Granby wants to tease me, he compares Howard to myself by referring to the way I rushed through things the first two years after I came here. He says we must wait for Howard to understand, what I have nearly learned,—that more can be accomplished when we do not undertake too much."

"I should like to see you administer discipline!

What do you do? Do you suppose the children know when they are punished?" asked Mrs. Bristol, with an amused laugh, in which Julia merrily joined, replying:

"I punish them in the old-fashioned way my mother and grandmother employed."

"And does Mr. Granby take a share in this household government? What are his methods?"

"I have never asked any questions, but from remarks the children make, I think a little willow switch is successful in bringing about the desired results."

"I never should have dreamed of such a thing," continued Mrs. Bristol, still laughing. "Will you not invite me over when something of the sort is going on? I would rather witness that, than attend the finest concert ever given in New York."

"No, indeed! Such performances are quite private, and rarely referred to afterwards. We are most careful about this, for among other things we wish to foster self-respect in our children. To do this we must show respect for their feelings.

"But they are not all bad! They are most generous, kind-hearted little fellows, and seem to be naturally truthful, perfectly so, I think. I never knew anything—the loss of anticipated pleasure, or the prospect of certain punishment—to cause them to swerve from what was strictly true.

"Then, too, young as they are, they seem to be religiously inclined. Since Seymour was one year old, I have made a practice of taking him alone every day and praying for him. Now Howard accompanies us. I feel that they understand what it

means, for sometimes when Seymour is not behaving well, I say to him, 'I think you would better go and pray'; and he always drops everything and runs to his room, Howard, of course, following him. Standing near the door I have seen them kneel side by side, and heard little Seymour's voice as he prayed; and although I am not near enough to understand what he says, the Lord hears, for he always comes back quiet and good.

"With these characteristics to work upon, we feel that all is possible for our boys, as far as developing them into true and noble manhood is concerned."

"Yes, I see you are likely to go on your way to the end of the chapter; and I am as little likely to change as yourself; I, too, am accomplishing the ambition of my life, which, as you know, is to be a leader in New York society, and I thoroughly enjoy my triumph. But you have no such ambition for yourself and children."

"No. My supreme ambition for them and for myself, reaches beyond the bounds of time and mortality, on through the eternal years of God,—there to be ever, and yet ever growing into the perfection made possible for us, through the love of Christ."

"Yes, and you will reach it!" replied Mrs. Bristol, in the most serious manner I ever heard her speak. "You will accomplish your ambition, and sometimes you almost stir me to imitate your example." Kissing Julia, she bade her good-night.

When she was gone Julia said:

"If I could only see Mrs. Bristol getting the best

out of life, and devoting her really superior powers to the noblest ends, it seems just now as if I could ask for little more. I have always loved the woman."

CHAPTER XXIX.

Thus for another year in the Granby family life passed peacefully, happily and uneventfully, filled with duties that grew more precious as the good thus wrought was more fully understood.

Early the next winter Julia found her home cares greatly increased, for her hitherto healthy children, sharing the fate common to childhood, passed through a siege of whooping-cough. Seymour did not suffer much, and beyond the necessity for carefulness to avoid his taking cold, he gave little extra trouble. But little Howard was seriously ill, and caused his parents and Mrs. Rodgers no small concern. This anxiety, the close confinement and nights of broken rest, wore upon Julia until her husband and friends were apprehensive lest the outcome be more unfavorable for her than for the children.

But when, at the end of three months, measles came to distress the household still further, leaving both children, Howard especially, pale and weak, Julia began to look like an invalid herself. To augment the trouble, one bitter cold night early in March, Julia was aroused by Howard's hoarse coughing, and fearing croup, she ran hastily through the hall to call Mrs. Rodgers, and returned to her room. By this time she was thoroughly chilled, but giving no further attention to herself than simply to draw on a dressing-gown, she directed her whole

thought and effort to relieve her baby, who, between his choking struggles, clung frantically to his mother.

They worked for two hours. The most alarming symptoms over, Mrs. Rodgers became conscious of Julia's danger and insisted on her returning to bed at once, while she applied such remedies as were at hand to ward off the cold, which Julia's already husky voice showed she had taken.

The next day, though tired and languid, Julia was around as usual. But Mrs. Rodgers was uneasy about her and very glad when Mr. Granby, who had been hastily summoned to the bedside of his invalid brother, returned. Mr. Granby insisted on calling a physician at once, although Julia declared that she was really better than she had been for some time. Indeed, she seemed to have recovered her usual spirits and persistently busied herself about the home; but the color that burned in her cheeks was not the old-time flush of health, and her increasing weakness gave serious cause for anxiety.

When April came, we, as well as the physician, realized that not only was her disease fatal, but that we could hope to keep her only a few weeks longer at the most. The spring was unusually early, but the bright sunshine and gentle breezes that brought strength and vigor back to the children and made the green grass start up on the lawn, only seemed to hasten Julia more rapidly from her earthly home and friends.

Julia was well aware of what awaited her, but it made no change in her quiet, cheerful life. She spoke as naturally of her speedy departure as she

had of her plans when about to start for Europe. One day Mrs. Rodgers said to her:

"My dear, your calm, happy spirit is a great comfort to us all. In the years to come we shall look upon these last precious days with great thankfulness."

Julia turned her unusually bright eyes upon Mrs. Rodgers, and with a clear, steady look, replied:

"And why should these not be happy, restful days for us all? As far as I myself am concerned, years ago I trusted all in the hands of God, and have been more than satisfied with the way He has rewarded my trust; and I have great peace as I look forward to the future." Pausing a moment, she continued:

"I am glad this peace, although stronger and deeper than ever before, is not new to me,—that I have had it for years. Were it otherwise, I should fear it was one of the deceptive characteristics common to my malady. But I know it is not this, for in the days of health and strength I proved what it means to have 'peace like a river,'—the 'peace that passeth understanding.' "

"This is the sweetest memory you can leave with us, that the same faith that has actuated your life abides with you now. But, Julia, if it is not a painful subject, will you tell me how you feel about parting with Howard and the children?"

With a sweet, quiet smile she replied:

"It is a long time since I have had any dread of the changes our Heavenly Father may, in His wisdom, send to us. I have no fear but all will be done in the way that will work out to be most for His glory, and our highest good. No, I have perfect

rest of mind concerning things on earth and things in heaven.

"Of course," and the sweet face took on a grave look, "I cannot help feeling sorry for Howard. I cannot help seeing what this parting is to him. But I know that God loves and pities him more than I can, so I know that it is not wrong for me to sympathize with him and feel sorry for him. But I also know that God will bless and comfort him beyond anything of which we have any conception."

After resting a moment she went on:

"Now, this is the way I feel about the future. I know that Howard is the Lord's, and that having kept him thus far, He will keep him to the end. Howard will go right on, leading an earnest, consecrated, useful life, and at the end, which to me seems only a little way off, we shall be together again.

"As for the children,—well, you know, I think I did a great thing for my children when I married their father, in that I complied with the scriptural injunction, 'Be ye not unequally yoked together.' A dying mother must have food for much unhappy thought over leaving her children to the care of an unchristian father.

"When our children were born, Howard and I committed them to God, and we have been united in our efforts to bring them up 'in the fear and admonition of the Lord.' Now my part of this work is done, and as I leave husband and children in His hands, I can trust Him to guide and help Howard as he takes up his work alone, just as He has guided and helped us in the past." For a time Julia seemed lost in thought, and then began again:

"Mistakes I may have made in the management of family matters, but God knew I tried to do what would please Him and has graciously overruled them. Therefore, with nothing of the past to trouble me, the present and future I trust to His love."

In subsequent conversations Julia asked Mrs. Rodgers if she would be willing to remain in the home, and help Mr. Granby take care of her boys until they grew to manhood, should she and they be spared so long. To this Mrs. Rodgers sadly consented, and they spent much time talking over plans for the future, Julia freely expressing what she wished and hoped for her children.

One morning, as she lay on a couch that had been drawn up to a window where she could look out beyond the river, and enjoy the sight of budding trees and springing grass, Julia said to me:

"Esther, but one thing troubles me; it so hurts me to see the grief in Howard's face. He tries to hide it from me and to talk with me cheerfully, as in the past, but some way I love him so much it seems as if I could feel his very thoughts. I know his trust in God is firm, but this separation from me is breaking his heart.

"There are some things which it would be a relief to talk over with him more fully than I have done, but when I begin to speak, in spite of his strongest effort, his face grows so white,—so tense and drawn with the pain he feels, that I have not the heart to pursue the subject. So I would like to talk over these matters with you, if you do not mind. You know that next to Howard you are my dearest friend."

Having assured her that I was glad to do anything that would give her comfort, she told me of many little things she would like to have done when she was gone; also, of little keepsakes she would like delivered to many of those whom she called her people; and mentioned many other things that were of a personal and sacred character.

Then she spoke of the disposition she had made of her property, saying she had provided for the support of many charitable and philanthropic institutions, and for Mr. Gray's work. When I remarked upon the completeness of her arrangements, she replied:

"Oh, don't you remember, once, when you were speaking of my extraordinarily good health, and asked if I had ever thought of the possibility of being unexpectedly called from this world, that I told you I had, and that all was in readiness for my Lord to come? So there has been little to do by way of final preparations, for I had thought it all out long before I was sick. To a great extent, I have fulfilled my wish to become my own executor, and most of my money is bestowed where I would have it.

"Perhaps," she continued, "you would like to know something about what we have done regarding family matters. Of course I wanted to make some special provision for my husband. True, he makes a great deal of money by his profession, but one never knows what may occur. When I spoke to him about this, and of my desire to leave him at least twenty-five thousand dollars with the understanding that it should never be spent, except for his own

personal use, he said that while he felt quite sure he would never need the money, yet, if it would be any comfort to me, he would most willingly consent to my doing so, and promised to use it only as I had requested.

"I have also left my boys twenty-five thousand dollars each. Howard will support and educate them, so that by the time they are twenty-one years old, the interest that will accrue, added to the principal, will give them each a good capital. Of this Howard also approves. He says that if they grow up the sort of men we hope and believe they will, this will be more than sufficient to start them in life."

"But do you not think," I asked, "that this may impress others as indicating a weakness of faith on your part? Will it not seem as if you do not altogether trust God to keep your boys in the right way, and to direct them in a wise use of all this money you have thus placed beyond their reach?"

"Logical people will not form such conclusions. Whatever I might do, unreasonable people would misunderstand.

"When this property came into my possession, I consecrated myself and all I owned to the service of God.

"All I expended upon myself before marriage was in preparation to make the best use of my wealth. Since my marriage none of it has been spent upon myself or family.

"I feel it is right to make the provision I have mentioned for my husband and children. Beyond this, I must render back to God the trust He

gave me. It has been simply a question of how to do it.

"While God does promise me that He will care for and guide them, He does not assure me that my sons will live to grow up; or if they do, that they will be able to manage so large a property. It may be, too, that like their father, they will choose a line of work in which they will prefer to be unimcumbered with wealth. Or, as was the case with the property of the grandfather of grandmamma Whittington, it may pass from them into unworthy hands.

"Therefore, by devoting it to causes which I have studied, I have made sure of the money being used to benefit the world."

"All this is true, and should your boys not become such men as you hope they may, the money they will have will be more than enough for them."

"I have no misgivings as to that."

"Neither have I. I am speaking on general principles that all parents would do well to consider."

"Yes, I understand. I have also left Mrs. Rodgers twenty-five thousand dollars and provided for Nellie Millburn. And Esther, dear Esther, I have left twenty-five thousand dollars for your personal use. You will not refuse me this last wish for you?"

I could not resist the pleading manner in which she said this, so I consented to her request. She seemed quite wearied now, and with a satisfied, happy expression, soon fell into a restful sleep.

This quiet life went on until early May. One morning Mrs. Bristol came quietly in, looking unusually grave, and appeared to be nerving herself for the occasion. This seemed nothing strange, for

we all felt that a few hours at the most would bring the close of this beautiful life here. Julia had appeared weaker this morning, and was lying with closed eyes, but looked up as Mrs. Bristol entered, and smiled the welcome she seemed too languid to speak. Mrs. Bristol went softly to her side, saying:

"I would like to tell her something. Do you think she is able to hear me? I will not be long."

Mrs. Rodgers and I rose to leave the room, but Mrs. Bristol raised her hand to detain us, and hastily said:

"No, what I have to say I want you all to hear." Then turning to Julia, she proceeded:

"Mrs. Granby, I have hastened here this morning, fearing I might be too late, to tell you that after a hard struggle of weeks' duration, I have at last decided to live for nobler things than I have hitherto sought,—to begin life all over again, and try to be like you in my ambitions and efforts. I can never be to the world and to my friends just what you have been—I have begun too late for that. But even so, I feel that God has accepted me, and will make of me and the remainder of my life the best that is possible. My husband joins me in this, and asked me to tell you that he too feels he is now a child of God."

The look of exceeding joy that shone in Julia's face startled us all, for it seemed greater than her frail frame could bear. In a low voice she replied:

"Please sing that hymn with the chorus, 'We'll carry the tidings home,' " which we, with difficulty, did. Then lifting her almost transparent hands,

with an effort she placed her arms around Mrs. Bristol's neck, saying:

"God knows all about this now, but as soon as I get home I'll tell this great good news over and over again." Then embracing her, Mrs. Bristol withdrew.

It had been a glorious day, upon which Julia had several times remarked. As the afternoon wore on the room seemed flooded with sunshine. Mrs. Rodgers, Mrs. Willard, Mr. Granby and I sat near, intently watching beside her; she seemed to have fallen into a sweet, restful slumber. After a few minutes Mrs. Willard made a movement directing our attention to her, and we saw that her pure spirit had taken its flight, leaving but its casket behind. But what a beautiful casket! So fair, so sweet and youthful looked the waxen face, so childlike the angelic smile, that a few hours later it was decided by those who could think about such preparations, that only a white receptacle and a white velvet pall, with delicate blue forget-me-nots embroidered in the corners, with the same delicate blossoms placed in the white hands, were appropriate.

We will not linger over these details. We all felt that any ostentation would be unseemly, and only the members of the Granby family who could leave their homes at the time, and Julia's most intimate friends were present during the last rites. But the wreaths and clusters of flowers that found their way to the house testified to the many loving friends whose hearts were moved in sadness with our own. Some of these floral tributes touched us deeply, for they came from poor people, whose

offerings showed their appreciation of the kindness Julia had ever manifested towards them. Others there were,—costly ones,—bearing no names of senders,—but just a line, saying that the life that had been as sweet as the flowers had helped to brighten their lives, in memory of which the blossoms were dedicated. Few indeed had been sent as a mere formality. As far as we knew, they were from those who had not waited for an opportunity to make a public display of their love for Julia, but had proved it to her during life.

The next morning I met Mr. Granby leading Seymour and Howard through the upper hall. Some one had taken charge of the children's attire and dressed them in little mourning suits. Mr. Granby's face wore a distressed look as he said to me:

"Esther, I have been looking for you everywhere. Will you not see that these children are dressed in their ordinary clothing? I know Julia's mind on this subject, and it would have grieved her to have any of us make such a demonstration as this. Besides, I do not want Julia's boys to have the memory of their mother shadowed in this way. Hers was a sunshiny life, and I want all recollections associated with her to leave a correct impression upon their minds."

I took the children, dressed them in the blue velvet suits their mother had ordered only a month before, and brought them back to their father. It made my heart glad as I saw the relieved look upon his face, and he seemed for a moment almost cheerful as he said:

"Thank you, that is more suitable."

He kept the children with him most of the day, even sitting near them while they slept. I saw that already, as far as possible, he had taken the place and obligations of both parents.

The last time I looked upon Julia's dear face, the heavenly light that seemed breaking through the loved lineaments was speaking, as no human words could speak, of her rest and peace, and of her love for us. It almost seemed as if there were a halo about her. "Robed in holiness," were the only words that suitably expressed the thought then suggested to my mind. I could but recall her words to the minister the last time he visited her, and I think it fitting to close this record with them.

In response to his inquiry whether her hopes of the future continued as bright as ever, she replied:

"Why should they not? I know,—better than any one save God,—how imperfect and unsatisfactory my life has been. But my hopes are not resting upon my past life,—not upon anything I have said or done. I rest only in the efficacy of the great Atonement. Without Christ I should be undone, wretched, miserable,—lost; but God knew I wanted to be good, and long ago He took me as I was, and since I had no goodness of my own, He robed me in Christ's righteousness."

Truly, no other words could describe her appearance, with the holy light resting upon her face and wrapping her about,—only, "Robed in Christ's Righteousness."

THE END

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